DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 330 925 CG 023 267

TITLE	Helping Children Succeed: A Handbook of Programs, Schools and Resources that Are Making a Difference.
INSTITUTION	Maine Aspirations Compact, Augusta.; Maine Univ., Orono.
SPONS AGENCY	Aetna Life and Casualty Foundation, Inc., Hartford, CT.; Maine State Dept. of Educational and Cultural Services, Augusta.
PUB DATE	Dec 89
NOTE	97p.; Funding also received from the Betterment Fund and Maine Development Foundation.
PUB TYPE	Guides - General (050)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Academic Achievement; Academic Standards; Career Exploration; Career Planning; Community Role; Early Childhood Education; *Educational Needs; Elementary Secondary Education; *Excellence in Education; High Risk Students; School Community Relationship; Student Development; Student Improvement
IDENTIFIERS	Maine

ABSTRACT

In its first publication, "Helping Children Succeed," the Maine Aspirations Compact recommended strategies to help students raise their personal expectations, improve their academic performance, and expand their educational, career, and personal choices. This companion document presents a collection of successful efforts that are intended to guide students, parents, educators, and community leaders in examining the aspirations and educational needs of youth, and to help develop programs which respond to those needs. The handbook is organized into five sections. Section 1, User's Guide, includes the table of contents and a reference matrix which portrays the connections between the programs, schools, and resources profiled in the handbook, and lists five components of a model for achieving higher aspirations. Section 2, Program Profiles, includes information on 27 programs, primarily operating in Maine, many of which have the potential to be adapted in other communities. Section 3, School Profiles, examines six Maine schools that have developed effective learning environments for their students. The common thread among all these schools is their commitment to educational success for students. Section 4, Resource Profiles, provides information about eight resources in Maine that can be helpful for program planning and implementation. Section 5, MAC/UM Project, describes the activities of the Maine Aspirations Compact (MAC) and the University of Maine (UM) Aspirations Project. (LLL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED330925

HELPING CHILDREN Succeed

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A HANDBOOK OF PROGRAMS, SCHOOLS AND RESOURCES THAT ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

CG023267

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Kathleen Barat

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

A JOINT PUBLICATION OF THE MAINE ASPIRATIONS COMPACT
AND UNIVERSITY OF MAINE ASPIRATIONS PROJECT

Maine Aspirations Compact
45 Memorial Circle
Augusta, ME 04330
207/ 626-3113

University of Maine
Aspirations Project
129 Shibles Hall
Orono, ME 04469
207/ 581-2427

STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333

JOHN R. McKERNAN, JR.
GOVERNOR

December, 1989

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to share with you this handbook of programs, schools and resources that are making a difference in the lives and aspirations of youth and adults. The handbook was produced jointly by the Maine Aspirations Compact and the University of Maine Aspirations Project. Through the leadership of these two organizations, we have come to understand the importance of involving families, schools, businesses and the community in promoting higher aspirations.

In its first publication, *Helping Children Succeed*, the Maine Aspirations Compact recommended strategies to help students raise their personal expectations, improve their academic performance and expand their educational, career and personal choices. This companion document, *Helping Children Succeed: A Handbook of Programs, Schools and Resources That Are Making a Difference*, presents a collection of successful efforts that can guide you – as a student, parent, educator or community leader – in examining the aspirations and educational needs of youth in your community and helping to develop programs which respond to those needs. The handbook is organized in five sections.

Section One - User's Guide includes the table of contents and a reference matrix which looks at the connections between the programs, schools and resources profiled in the handbook and the five components to achieving higher aspirations identified by the University of Maine Aspirations Project. The components are social context, self concept, high expectations, skills and knowledge and choices.

Section Two - Program Profiles includes information on a diverse group of twenty-seven programs, primarily operating in Maine, many of which have the potential to be adapted in other communities.

Section Three - School Profiles examines six Maine schools that have developed effective and exciting learning environments for their students. The common thread among all these schools is their commitment to educational success for students.

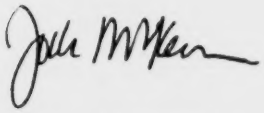
Section Four - Resource Profiles contains information about eight resources in Maine that can be helpful to you as you think through your community's needs and design or adapt initiatives in response to those needs.

Section Five - MAC/UM Project discusses the Maine Aspirations Compact and the University of Maine Aspirations Project and their activities.

While this handbook has been prepared to be a source of ideas, it is not designed to be a "cookbook" for change, nor does it include every worthwhile effort currently being implemented. The programs, schools and resources profiled in this handbook were included because in their own way, each is making a difference in the lives of children, youth and adults.

I encourage you, through your family, schools, businesses and community groups, to take action so that Maine students who reach adulthood in the twenty-first century are competent, creative and in charge of their own futures.

Sincerely,



John R. McKernan, Jr.
Governor

Acknowledgments

The Maine Aspirations Compact and the University of Maine Aspirations Project gratefully acknowledge the fine work of the Maine Center for Educational Services and, in particular, Jane deFrees, Tamera Grieshaber and Robert Shafto for the research, writing, editing and layout of this document. The staff team responsible for the content and production of the handbook includes Leanne Greeley Bond, Heidi McGinley and Laurie Winsor for the Maine Aspirations Compact and William Preble and Betsy Sweet for the University of Maine Aspirations Project.

Funding for the research, preparation, printing and distribution of the handbook was provided by the following organizations:

- Aetna Life and Casualty Foundation;
- The Betterment Fund;
- Department of Educational & Cultural Services; and
- Maine Development Foundation.

Helping Children Succeed • Handbook
Table of Contents

Program Profiles	Contact	Phone	Page
ABC-Read to Me	Muriel Parker	207-327-1246	1
Adopt-A-School	Peter Geiger	207-783-2001	3
All Terrain Volunteers (ATV)	Ken Schmidt	207-733-5541	5
Aroostook Mental Health Center Substance Abuse Prevention Program	Jack Foster	207-498-6431	7
Aspirations Teen Theater	Bill Preble	207-581-2427	9
Bonny Eagle Adolescent Health & Parenting Center	Laureen Bercume	207-929-3831	11
Building Alternatives	Gary Snider	207-282-9086	13
Career Beginnings	Bill Bloomfield	800-343-4705	15
City As School	Marie Reilly	212-645-6121	17
Critical Skills Program	Peter Eppig	603-357-3122	19
Early Intervention Reading and Language	Les Butler	207-843-6010	21
Education Is a Student's First Job	Wayne Sherman	207-284-4591	23
Educator-In-Residence	Leanne Greeley Bond	207-622-6345	25
Future Problem Solving Program	Ann Crabbe	919-276-8361	27
I Make the Difference	Jeannine Backus	207-897-3325	29
Independent Study Week	Tom Rowe	207-364-4547	31
Mastery Learning	David Squires	201-219-1857	33
Math-Science Scholars Program	Robert Shafto	207-783-0833	35
One-Minute Messages	Raj Chopra	913-677-6447	37
Project Adventure	Kayda Selby	207-783-0833	39
Project LEAD	Greg Long	800-288-6401	41
Project RECON	Shelley Swazey	207-943-7346	43
Reflections	Larinda Meade	207-289-5854	45
Student Leadership Workshop	Ted Davis	207-824-2136	47
TESA	Scott Myers	207-336-2666	49
Upward Bound	Alan Parks	207-581-2522	51
We Care	Les Sladek	402-393-4335	53
School Profiles			
Franklin Alternative School	David Eretzian	207-782-3242	55
Maranacook Community School	Hazel Rand	207-685-4923	57
Piscataquis Community High School	Norm Higgins	207-876-4503	59
River Valley Alternative School	Mark Bechtel	207-225-3406	61
Skowhegan Area Middle School	Jerry Lynch	207-474-3330	63
Windham Primary Schools	Donna Stephen	207-892-1840	65
Resource Profiles			
Adult and Community Education	Dana Green	207-289-5854	67
Career Exploration and Education	Nancy Perry	207-289-5925	69
Community and School Based Support Groups	Michel Lahti	207-289-3876	71
Higher Education Linkages	Jay Labov Edward Brazee Louis Fourman	207-872-3329 207-581-2482 207-581-3875	73
Hurricane Island Outward Bound School	Celeste Frisbee	207-595-5548	75
Innovative Educational Grant Program	Jean Konzal	207-289-5981	77
Maine Computer Consortium	Cathy Glaude	207-783-0833	79
Maine Facilitator Project	Elaine Roberts	207-783-0833	81

Reference Matrix

The following matrix incorporates five components that the University of Maine Aspirations Project has identified as being important to the development of individual aspirations. These components form a model that can assist you in two ways:

- to identify the factors that influence and shape an individual's aspirations; and
- to focus on the programs, schools and resources profiled in this handbook that can have the most meaningful impact on the young people and adults in your community.

The first component in the model identifies the **social context** within which an individual's aspirations are shaped: school, family, community, business and peers. It is from this context that individuals develop their values and beliefs.

The second component focuses on the importance of a **positive self-concept** and high self-esteem. Although one person cannot give another high self-esteem, we can create the conditions necessary to develop a positive self concept (Simon). These conditions include: having a "leg-up" person or mentor; opportunities for positive risk taking; feeling special; belonging to a group; being empowered to make choices; and being involved in productive activities.

The third component of the aspirations model is **high expectations**. Individuals who have high expectations of themselves are more likely to possess the motivation necessary to set high goals and achieve them.

The fourth component consists of acquiring the **skills and knowledge** necessary to accomplish given tasks or to reach an identified goal. The range of opportunities open to individuals is largely determined by their willingness and ability to acquire new skills and information.

The fifth component of the aspirations model is **choices**, which includes both educational and career choices. Making good choices requires that individuals know what options are available and have the skills necessary to pursue the options that best suit their interests and abilities.

These five components are the building blocks that enable individuals to envision the style or quality of life they want for themselves. Having a life vision provides meaning and context for the decisions we make in our lives.

The components of this aspirations model are listed across the top of the reference matrix; the individual programs, schools and resources profiled in this handbook are listed to the left. The matrix identifies those components of the University of Maine Aspirations Project's model which are incorporated within each of the profiles contained in the handbook. We hope this visual guide helps you to identify projects that can make a difference for young people and adults in your community.

Program Profiles

School Profiles

Resource Profiles

REFERENCE MATRIX

	SOCIAL CONTEXT					SELF-CONCEPT						HIGH	SKILLS	CHOICES	
	Family	Peers	School	Community	Business	Productivity	Belonging	Leg-Up Person	Risk Taking	Empower-ment	Feeling Special	EXPECTA-TIONS	AND KNOW-LEDGE	Education	Career
ABC-Read to Me	•	•	•			•	•				•	•	•		
Adopt-A-School			•		•	•		•			•	•	•		
All Terrain Volunteers			•	•		•			•	•		•	•	•	•
Aroostook Mental Health Center Substance Abuse Prevention Program	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Aspirations Teen Theater		•	•	•		•			•	•		•	•		
Bonny Eagle Adolescent Health & Parenting Center	•		•				•	•		•		•	•	•	
Building Alternatives		•	•	•	•	•			•	•		•	•	•	•
Career Beginnings			•	•	•	•		•		•	•	•		•	•
City as School			•	•	•	•			•			•	•	•	•
Critical Skills Program			•						•	•		•	•		
Early Intervention Reading and Language Program	•		•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•		
Education Is a Student's First Job			•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•		•	
Educator-In-Residence			•		•	•	•		•	•		•	•		•
Future Problem Solving Program			•	•		•	•		•	•		•	•	•	
I Make the Difference		•	•				•		•	•	•	•	•		
Independent Study Week			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Mastery Learning		•	•				•					•	•		
Math-Science Scholars Program		•	•			•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
One-Minute Messages			•	•								•			
Project Adventure		•	•			•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	
Project LEAD		•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•		
Project RECON			•										•		
Reflections	•		•			•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	
Student Leadership Workshop		•	•	•		•	•		•	•	•	•	•		
TESA		•	•				•		•	•	•	•			
Upward Bound		•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
We Care			•	•		•	•				•				
Franklin Alternative School		•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Maranacook Community School		•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Piscataquis Community High School		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
River Valley Alternative School		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Skowhegan Area Middle School	•	•	•			•	•		•	•	•	•	•		
Windham Primary Schools	•	•	•			•	•		•	•	•	•	•		
Adult and Community Education			•	•	•	•			•	•		•	•	•	•
Career Exploration and Education		•	•	•	•	•			•	•		•	•	•	•
Community and School Based Support Groups		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Higher Education Linkages			•	•									•	•	•
Hurricane Island Outward Bound School		•	•			•			•	•		•	•		
Innovative Educational Grant Program			•										•		
Maine Computer Consortium			•										•	•	
Maine Facilitator Project			•										•	•	

Program Profiles

ABC — Read to Me ..... page 1
Adopt-A-School 3
All Terrain Volunteers (ATV) 5
Aroostook Mental Health Center Substance Abuse Prevention Program 7
Aspirations Teen Theater 9
Bonny Eagle Adolescent Health & Parenting Center 11
Building Alternatives 13
Career Beginnings 15
City As School 17
Critical Skills Program 19
Early Intervention Reading and Language 21
Education Is a Student's First Job 23
Educator-In-Residence 25
Future Problem Solving Program 27
I Make the Difference 29
Independent Study Week 31
Mastery Learning 33
Math-Science Scholars Program 35
One-Minute Messages 37
Project Adventure 39
Project LEAD 41
Project RECON 43
Reflections 45
Student Leadership Workshop 47
TESA 49
Upward Bound 51
We Care 53

ABC-Read to Me

A preschool program which helps rural parents prepare their children for school.

Location

Bradford and Hudson, Maine.

Population Served

Parents, children ages four and five.

Purpose and Goals

School records in SAD 64 showed that each year, 20 to 25% of entering kindergarten students were at risk of school failure because they did not have the social and language skills needed to make their early school experience successful. There were no publicly or privately organized nursery schools, no support groups or parenting classes available for parents, and no preschool library programs available. ABC-Read To Me is a means for parents to learn how to help their children gain some of the social and language skills necessary to be more successful in school.

The objectives of the program are to:

- provide a time and place for parents to play with their children and read to them;
- teach parents how to teach their children at home;
- increase the amount of time that parents read to their children at home; and
- provide an opportunity for parents and children to explore the library resources together.

Planning

Teachers and parents of Bradford and Hudson organized ABC-Read to Me after becoming aware of the problems children without preschool experience were having in school. Bradford Elementary School received two Department of Educational & Cultural Services (DECS) Innovative Education Grants in 1986 and 1987 to implement the program. The local library, which is normally opened only on Saturdays, agreed to open one morning each week to accommodate the program. All four and five year old children were invited to participate with a parent.

A surprising change has been the marked increase of volunteer commitment by parents who have participated in the preschool program. The town librarian noticed that summer readership has increased and parents who participate in the program are returning to use the library on their own.

Components

A parent coordinator, the local librarian, and a parent assistant are responsible for selecting books, preparing activities, and providing services. In September, letters are mailed to parents of eligible children informing them about the activities and meeting time. A questionnaire asks for their participation and about their need for transportation or child care for younger children. They meet for one hour each week for a non-structured playtime, a structured reading and activity period, and free time to explore the library and check out books. At their first session, children receive an incentive Bag-a-Library-Book bag with crayons, scissors, pencils and coloring books. Each week parents receive flyers describing activities to do at home that promote school readiness.

Accomplishments

The program has served about fifteen children each year, about half of the number of entering kindergarten students. The principal and the librarian feel they still need to reach out to the rest of the four and five year old children in the community and their parents.

Children who have participated are more interested in books when they enter kindergarten than those children who have not had a similar experience. They know how to handle their books, know their colors and how to use scissors, have other similar skills and are accustomed to sitting and listening in a group setting. A surprising change has been the marked increase of volunteer commitment by parents who have participated in the preschool program. The town librarian noticed that summer readership has increased and parents who participate in the program are returning to use the library on their own.

Budget

DECS Innovative Grants totaling $5,500 funded the first two years of planning, salaries for the parent coordinator, parent assistants and librarian and the purchase of books and supplies. The cost of the program is now about $1,000 per year, which is funded through the town budget.

Contact

Muriel Parker
J.B. Curtis Free Public Library
Bradford, Maine 04410
(207) 327-1246

Norma Trask
Bradford Elementary School
RR 1 Box 268
Bradford, Maine 04410
(207) 327-1112

Adopt-A-School

A business/education partnership.

Location

Lewiston, Maine.

Population Served

Students in grades K-6.

Purpose and Goals

Geiger Brothers, publishers of *The Farmers' Almanac*, and Montello Elementary School have formed a successful partnership aimed at demonstrating to students that parents and teachers are not the only people who care about student success in school.

Geiger Brothers' primary objective was to contribute employee time rather than money to the the project. The school wanted to reach out to a group of at-risk youngsters who needed to make a special connection with someone who could give them attention.

Planning

Peter Geiger, Vice President of Sales and Marketing and Editor of *The Farmers' Almanac*, became very interested in the Adopt-A-School concept after giving a lecture to a group of students in Atlanta during an *Almanac* promotional tour. DeKalb County, Georgia has an extensive Adopt-A-School Program that has facilitated more than fifty adoptions since 1984. They developed a handbook, needs assessment and resource forms for people interested in forming their own partnerships.

The principal of Montello Elementary School had spoken with the Lewiston school superintendent about exploring some business-education links in 1987. Later that year, Mr. Geiger approached the superintendent about the Adopt-A-School program and a partnership was born. Members of the school staff and representatives of Geiger Brothers then met to brainstorm some ideas for collaboration. They decided to focus initially on a group of at-risk students.

It certainly would have been easier to write a check and have been done with it, but we wanted to do something unique and hopefully more productive.

Geiger Brothers Executive

Components

The Geiger Brothers/Montello School partnership involves five specific activities:

- Study Buddy: a one-on-one tutoring program for ten to fifteen at-risk students. Employees of Geiger Brothers go to the school for one hour each week to tutor these students, play games with them and talk. Students also visit Geiger Brothers with their Study Buddy to link school with the outside world.
- Writing and Illustration Teams: employees of Geiger brothers visit classrooms to discuss creative writing and the design and layout of newsletters. This has resulted in two projects that involved many students.
- Poetry Anthology: a publication which gives all students the opportunity to enter an original poem in a school-wide contest. Teachers select two pieces from each class. Geiger Brothers publishes the works in a book that is given to the students.

- Art Gallery: Geiger Brothers mats and displays student artwork in their building. Parents, teachers and employees are invited for an evening reception to view the work and students are given recognition certificates for their efforts.

- State of Maine Unit: Geiger Brothers supplies some resource materials that the teachers use in the fourth grade curriculum.

Accomplishments

The Adopt-A-School partnership is beneficial to a large number of students. The students participating in the Study Buddy program have a "leg-up" person to identify with and give them the feeling of being someone special in their school. The Anthology and the Gallery touches the most students and unites the school in a very positive learning experience. Parents are very pleased with both projects.

Geiger Brothers' management has been pleasantly surprised by the reaction of the employees involved with Adopt-A-School. Their morale was really boosted by the gratitude of the kids. The program gives both educators and business people the opportunity to see what was happening on both sides. They realize that every business has problems that must be dealt with and the educational system is no different.

Budget

Geiger Brothers releases all participating employees during the regular work day for Study Buddies and to speak to students. The Anthology and matting of art work are done during the regular work day. All supplies and materials costs are paid by the company.

Replication

Geiger Brothers and Montello School are looking forward to continuing their partnership. They hope to develop more communication between teachers and volunteers as they explore new avenues for their collaboration. Suggestions they offer for others interested in the Adopt-A-School concept include:

- have a single contact person for each partner, someone responsible for coordinating activities and communications at their school/ business;

- provide orientation for volunteers so that they know what to expect from the kids they are working with and have a teacher as a resource for the child;

- use human rather than financial resources to create a partnership that will be meaningful to all; and

- avoid taking on too many projects at one time. All of the people in the partnership are busy and will be more effective if they are not spread too thin.

Contact

Peter Geiger
Geiger Brothers
Mt. Hope Avenue
Lewiston, Maine 04240
(207) 783-2001

Tom Hood
Montello Elementary School
East Street
Lewiston, Maine 04240
(207) 783-3390

All Terrain Volunteers (ATV)

Motivating students to pursue post-secondary education.

Location

Lubec, Maine.

Population Served

Students ages 12-19.

Purpose and Goals

The intent of All Terrain Volunteers (ATV) is to motivate students toward post-secondary and vocational education. The program recruits and places teenage volunteers in working environments which are exciting and valuable to the teens. Student participants gain job experience and references for future jobs as they are introduced to the world of work. Meaningful volunteer experience and pride in the community are the vehicles through which the program expects to increase aspirations.

Program Planning

The Regional Medical Center at Lubec initiated discussions with the Lubec High School principal about the need to motivate students to explore new career options and post-secondary educational opportunities. Lubec's declining population and limited job pool were seen as negative influences on student aspirations. These discussions led to the development of a grant proposal to ACTION, a federal volunteer program. ATV began its second year in September, 1989.

Components

Community agencies and businesses are asked to identify meaningful volunteer work experiences for students. Work activities range from clerical and daycare experiences to fundraising assistance. An individual work plan is developed for each student and training is provided at the volunteer work site.

The project director, an employee of the Regional Medical Center, visits schools to discuss ATV with principals, guidance personnel, teachers and students. Anyone interested in the program may apply directly to the project director, who then matches students with volunteer experiences.

Weekly volunteer sheets are completed by the site supervisors and signed by the student volunteer. These include information about the type of work the student has been involved with, hours worked and performance. The project director reviews this information and visits each site every other week to observe and talk to the participants.

Participating organizations in the first year included:

Lubec Public Library
Whale Research Center
Electric Company
Medical Center
Lubec Fire Department
Area Nursing Homes
Child Care Centers
Public Schools

Lubec is one of the poorest towns in Maine and the nation. In 1987 the local unemployment rate was over three times the rate in Maine. Many Lubec students do not finish high school and a very low percentage go on to secondary education.

–Report of DownEasters For Teens Action Council

Accomplishments

Thirty students participated in the first year of the program and typically worked two to three hours a day, two days a week.

Students were very hesitant about going to the initial interview. Overcoming that major hurdle and doing productive work in their community was a great boost to their self-confidence. The majority of the students who have participated in the program are at the younger end of the age range and many are returning for the second year. The project director feels that this will enable ATV to be a stronger influence on the students. It is too early in the program to know what impact ATV is having on the number of students going on to post- secondary education.

Budget

ATV is funded through a three-year federal ACTION grant. The first year, $15,000 paid for a full-time director to establish the program. In the second and third years of the grant, $10,000 and $5,000 respectively will be received, with the remainder of the funding picked up by The Regional Medical Center and the local Teen Action Council.

Contact

Ken Schmidt
Regional Medical Center at Lubec
P.O. Drawer 130
Lubec, Maine 04652
(207) 733-5541

Aroostook Mental Health Center Substance Abuse Prevention Program

A comprehensive community-based prevention effort.

Location

Aroostook County, Maine.

Population Served

Youth ages 9 to 19 and their parents.

Purpose and Goals

The Prevention Project was undertaken in 1987 to provide a community support system which helps young people make a positive, drug-free transition to adulthood. Community leaders were concerned that families and schools were ill-equipped to address the variety of social problems which were negatively affecting area youth: peer pressure to use alcohol and other drugs; the lack of meaningful social and recreational activities; a community indifference to substance abuse; and the breakdown of parental and family relationships. By coordinating community level and state resources, the Prevention Project is able to provide educational programs and family services that help young people in Aroostook County develop and maintain a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

Planning

Planning was spearheaded by the Aroostook Mental Health Center in conjunction with community groups such as recreation departments. Mental health workers and community members became concerned about a county-wide problem of increased drug and alcohol abuse among children at ever younger ages. A survey given to law enforcement officials, schools, health personnel, youth and the general public confirmed the seriousness of the problem. Caribou and Madawaska served as pilot sites and programs are now available on request in all towns in Aroostook County.

Aroostook Mental Health Center serves all of Aroostook County with offices in Caribou, Presque Isle, Houlton, Madawaska, Van Buren, and Fort Kent. It is one of a network of eight community mental health services in Maine.

Attitudes of kids are improving, both in self-esteem and in rejection of drugs.
–Project Coordinator

Components

The Prevention Project is made up of a variety of programs tailored to meet the needs of each targeted group. The programs, offered in schools and in the community, include:

- Avenues to Healthy Lifestyles: a week-long course in grades 6-8 focusing on self-esteem, decision-making communication, peer pressure, responsibility and drug information.
- Peer Education: training high school students in listening skills, decision-making, and health-related issues to help them make healthy choices.
- Just Say No and Up with Teens: alternative programs in grades 4-8 providing education and activities to encourage a drug-free lifestyle among students.
- Buddy System Program: matching high school students with elementary students to enjoy activities and companionship.

- Drug Awareness: a 6-week course for families focusing on drugs, drug use and what families can do to promote drug-free children.

- PhoneFriend: an after-school help-line offering a supportive listener to provide information and referrals for children at home without adult supervision.

- Positive Approaches to Working with Youth: a one-day workshop for youth services providers focusing on substance abuse prevention and resources to utilize in contacts with young people.

- Parent Workshops: workshops designed to show parents how to teach their children coping skills and ways to enhance their child's self-esteem.

- Teen Leadership Camp: a five-day residential educational program for students in grades 8 and 9 to learn more about self-esteem, leadership, responsibility, peer pressure and drug abuse prevention.

Programs are implemented by Aroostook County Mental Health Center staff who also train and supervise volunteers involved in the programs. The Center also has three community educators who provide programs in stress management, assertiveness training and parenting in the communities and schools. They offer a mini-mental health course to 5th graders in 70% of the schools in Aroostook County to familiarize the students with concepts of mental health and available service providers.

Accomplishments

While far-reaching change cannot be expected so early in the program, young people who have participated are providing leadership in prevention efforts in their schools. Volunteers provide half the staff for the teen leadership camp in which seventeen schools have participated. Communities are increasingly supportive of the programs and co-sponsor them.

Budget

The project is funded by an annual $50,000 grant from the Alcohol Premium Fund administered by the Departments of Educational & Cultural Services, Mental Health, Human Services and Corrections.

Replication

Training materials have been published and Center staff are available to do training. This program was designed to be replicated in other parts of the state.

Contact

Jack Foster or Valerie Flewelling
Aroostook County Mental Health Center
P.O. Box 1018
1 Vaughn Place
Caribou, Maine 04736
(207) 498-6431

Aspirations Teen Theater

A statewide interactive theater program .

Location

Orono, Maine.

Population Served

Students in grades 6-12 and adults.

Purpose and Goals

Theater is a medium that almost everyone enjoys. The staff of the University of Maine Aspiration Project has used theater to help students explore the barriers to achieving their aspirations. University theater majors, or high school students trained by them, present situations that are immediately engaging and interesting to students and to adults. These situations become the springboard for indepth discussions of aspirations issues.

Aspirations Teen Theater provides an effective way for students to talk to each other in a safe, comfortable setting. Issues such as teen pregnancy, peer pressure, and alienation are but a few of the topics discussed through the interactive theater medium.

Planning

When the University of Maine Aspirations Project staff wanted to reach out to a wide variety of communities and interest groups about aspirations, they asked high school students to describe the things that prevent young people from reaching their life goals. Graduate students in theater at the University of Maine forged these comments into a three part interactive theater piece. Over the next year, Aspirations Teen Theater took the presentation to dozens of schools. Through discussion and interpretation, students helped develop a dynamic interactive teen theater presentation of aspirations issues.

I've tried to change. Really. But you get a reputation, you know. I just don't know how to change without everyone coming down on me.
–from a monologue in a theater piece

Components

Aspirations Teen Theater contains several pieces that are continually evolving: a wrestling scene in which the student confronts different challenges; a series of monologues about tough but common issues that students face in trying to reach their goals; and a party scene in which the audience is challenged to finish the plot. The monologues and the party scene are interactive. Discussion between the audience and the actors is facilitated by university faculty or school personnel. The directors of the project are working with several school-based groups, teaching students to create their own theater presentations. Students invent their own stories or scenarios about reaching life goals and overcoming barriers. When the scenes are polished, the students present them to area schools and community groups as a means of beginning a dialogue about aspirations issues.

Accomplishments

The presentation has been used successfully in over thirty-five communities. Over 1,000 students and adults saw the presentation last year. Many people in those audiences became interested enough to continue working on aspirations in their own schools. Two schools, Sumner High School and the Penobscot Job Corps, have used

Aspirations Teen Theater as a way to motivate students and are now training their own students to write and to perform their own theater projects.

Budget

The theater budget for performance and training is $20,000 a year funded by the University of Maine and private grants. Schools are charged approximately $250 per performance. Intensive training is provided on a school-by-school basis under a contract with the University of Maine Aspirations Project.

Replication

Any school can develop its own Aspirations Teen Theater with the school's drama instructor coordinating the project. University personnel will provide consultation and training over a six-week period. Groups from participating high schools are available to give performances. Arrangements can be made through the University of Maine Aspirations Project.

Contact

Bill Preble or Betsy Sweet
129 Shibles Hall
University of Maine
Orono, Maine 04469
(207) 581-2427

Bonny Eagle Adolescent Health & Parenting Center

Meeting the health needs of adolescents, including the needs of pregnant and parenting teens and their children.

Location

West Buxton, Maine.

Population Served

High school students from the communities of Buxton, Hollis, Limington and Standish.

Purpose and Goals

The Bonny Eagle Health & Parenting Center was developed to give adolescents access to health services not readily available to them. The goals of the Center are to: encourage students to take responsibility for their own health through education; to provide needed health care services to students; and encourage pregnant teens to remain in school by offering pre-natal education, child care, and parenting and career education. The Center is housed in a building next to the high school and is easily accessible to students.

Planning

The school nurse and the home economics teacher, concerned about pregnant teens dropping out of school and about the lack of adequate health care in the region, created the original idea for the Adolescent Health & Parenting Center. They formed a Community Advisory Board composed of community and religious leaders, parents and students. The Board provided support and suggestions as the project evolved and made sure that the community as a whole understood and agreed with the intent of the Center.

Components

The Center provides the following services:

- a parenting center with an infant/toddler child care component as its centerpiece, offering parenting and life skills education, as well as role-modeling opportunities to teen parents.
- a full-service health center for emergency needs as well as routine physicals, immunizations, individual health counseling and treatment of minor health problems. Referrals to outside resources are made for more complicated problems.
- classroom instruction on health issues complementing the regular school curriculum as well as providing a laboratory setting for observation by parenting and child development classes.
- on-site substance abuse counseling and peer support groups for pregnant and parenting teens and students of dysfunctional families.

In a small, wood-frame building tucked among the trees behind Bonny Eagle High School, a student spends her lunch quietly tending a 4-month-old baby. Most other students are filing into the school's cafeteria for a daily helping of fish sticks and mashed potatoes, but here, in a room that is outfitted with cribs, toys, and rocking chairs, a bottle of infant formula is the major item on the menu. When the lunch time is over, the student hands the baby over to a child care worker, picks up her books and heads back to class. This is not an extracurricular course in home economics. This is real life.

–Portland Press Herald

Staff includes: a program director who functions as a teacher; administrator; child care provider; a nurse practitioner who works in consultation with a practicing physician; a medical secretary; a substance abuse counselor; and a psychiatric nurse clinician. Some staff are part time.

Accomplishments

The health program component has been very effective in meeting the general health needs of an adolescent population. In the past three years the parenting program has worked with twenty-three students. Ten have graduated and half of them have gone on to further education; five have moved away; and seven are continuing school this fall. The number of students dropping out due to pregnancy has been reduced significantly.

Budget

The first three years of the program were funded by a $70,000 yearly grant from the Department of Human Services. The program is now part of the regular school budget. Because more students are remaining in school, the services provided by the Parenting Center are paying for themselves, in part through the per-pupil state reimbursement.

Replication

The Center staff welcomes visitors to see how the Center operates and is available to present their program at conferences and workshops.

Contact

Laureen Bercume
Adolescent Health & Parenting Center
Bonny Eagle High School
West Buxton, Maine 04093
(207) 929-3831

Building Alternatives, Inc.

Pre-employment training and applied academics through building construction.

Location

Biddeford, Maine.

Population Served

Students ages 14 and older.

Purpose and Goals

Building Alternatives was designed to help at-risk students who were not succeeding in school. The program provides students with an opportunity to expand their skills through hands-on training with professional persons in the building trades and to improve their social skills and work habits while completing their academic program. The ultimate goal is to assist students in their choice of work, to help them get "a foot in the door," to give them a chance to show their worth and to motivate them to complete their schooling.

Planning

Building Alternatives began in 1987 as a joint venture of the Community Employment Project and the Portland Public Schools. The Community Employment Project was established in 1985 to provide job training and constructive work experiences so that disadvantaged adults and young people would gain skills, economic opportunity, and a sense of responsibility and accomplishment. In 1989, Building Alternatives Inc. became a private non-profit school, contracting with school districts to serve students referred to them through the PET (Pupil Evaluation Team) process.

Components

Building Alternatives follows the September to June school calendar, with an additional six weeks of summer programming also provided. The program includes these components:

- Job Readiness: hands-on training in basic carpentry and construction skills while integrating academics, personal/social skills and job readiness competencies. Students spend approximately thirty hours a week learning practical skills at an actual job site. Instruction and supervision are provided by two instructors to a crew of six to eight students.

- Integrated Learning: applied academics in math and English, especially oral skills, are an integral component of the vocational experience. Students qualify for high school credits through individual plans developed jointly by Building Alternatives and referring school personnel.

- Leadership Development: leadership concepts and skills are built by engaging young people in decision making responsibilities and validating their intelligence and their self-worth. Students learn to be crew leaders and help draft the program by-laws.

- Transition Options: depending on the student's specific needs, interests and age, Building Alternatives prepares and support each youth to successfully transition to one or a combination of options, including returning to school full time, obtaining a GED, entering a vocational school, and/or obtaining full-time employment.

Building Alternatives has given participants the incentive to finish high school and go on to the world of work.

Accomplishments

This program has only been in operation for one year, but so far students have shown improvement in math, English and tool identification on pre and post tests developed for the program. Building Alternatives has given participants the incentive to finish high school and go on to the world of work. Students from South Portland, Old Orchard Beach, Kennebunk, Biddeford and SAD 6 (Buxton) are participants.

Budget

Sending schools pay $9,800 per student. Students may participate full time or part time.

Replication

This program is an example of local schools working with community agencies to broaden options for their students. Project directors are available to help with replication of the program in other areas.

Contact

Gary Snider or Pat Young
Building Alternatives, Inc.
519A Pool Road
Biddeford, Maine 04005
(207) 282-9086

Career Beginnings

A college/business partnership to help high school students make the transition to college and/or careers.

Location

Sites throughout the country.

Population Served

High school juniors.

Purpose and Goals

Many "average" high school students think they are not good enough to go to college or lack the contacts and skills that are necessary for getting a job with a future. Career Beginnings is a mentor program to help these students plan for post-secondary education or career goals and find ways to achieve those goals. It links a college campus and the business community while matching students with adult mentors who offer advice and encouragement over a two-year relationship.

Planning

Career Beginnings is a model program developed by Brandeis University in 1985. It is traditionally sponsored by and administered through a local college or university and operates where mentors and students agree to meet. The Center for Human Resources at Brandeis University is a catalyst in starting new program sites by providing technical assistance, management advice, program ideas, public relations, regional and national meetings.

Components

Career Beginnings is a comprehensive goal-setting program consisting of four components:

- trained adult mentors from the business community or post-secondary education institution;
- continuing student workshops on life skills, college and career planning;
- quality summer work experiences; and
- on-going support during the first year of college, advanced training, or on the job.

The sponsoring college or university works closely with the secondary schools to assist in the selection of students to participate in Career Beginnings. The program works with average students – the middle 60% of the high school class – who are making it through school but seldom get the special attention granted students at the top of the class or at-risk students. Students are selected on the basis of teacher recommendation, self-referral, a series of interviews and a commitment to participate in the program for two years.

The most unique aspect of the program is the long term student/mentor relationship and the support offered during the first year after high school.

...over 95% stayed in the program and graduated from high school. Over 60% have gone on to college and based on a sample of participating students, over 90% completed their first year of college.

Accomplishments

More than 7,000 students/mentor partnerships have participated in twenty-five Career Beginnings projects. During the first two years, over 95% stayed in the program and graduated from high school. Over 60% have gone on to college and based on a sample of participating students, over 90% completed their first year of college. The remaining students have chosen successful career paths.

Budget

The costs associated with Career Beginnings are primarily the time donated by the administrative staff and mentors and materials necessary to promote the program. These will vary with each project. Costs have averaged about $1,500 per student.

Contact

Bill Bloomfield
Center for Human Resources
Heller Graduate School
Brandeis University
60 Turner Street
Waltham, Massachusetts 02254-9110
(800) 343-4705

City As School

Linking students with real life learning experiences within the community.

Location

New York, New York.

Population Served

Students in grades 9-12.

Purpose and Goals

City As School is an alternative, diploma-granting high school whose curriculum objective is to link students with their community through independent learning experiences in business, civic, cultural and political organizations. The underlying concept is that, through community learning experiences, school can be made more relevant for those students who find the traditional school setting threatening or unrelated to their present and future plans. It is also appropriate for students who are successful in the traditional setting, but looking for new educational horizons.

Students may combine traditional classes with learning experiences (LE). Instead of attending classes in one building, students move from learning experience to learning experience and receive academic credit toward a high school diploma. What is being learned varies in each LE, and the credits earned are directly related to the kind of work and learning successfully completed.

Planning

City As School was founded in New York City in 1972. After a year of planning with four faculty and fifteen students, City As School went into operation with sixty-one students and five faculty members in one room of a building. It is a validated National Diffusion Network Developer-Demonstrator Project.

City As School is a unique model that requires some changes in the organization of a traditional school program. Resistance to this change is natural and support for the concept must be built.

Components

The program is established on eight week cycles, with some LEs requiring more than one cycle. Credit received is based on the number of hours per week a student spends on the LE. Students are required to attend LEs for each scheduled school day and schedule make-up hours for times absent.

Staffing requires a teacher (who could serve the dual role of resource coordinator and advisor if the project involved a small number of students) and secretarial assistance. Some provision for transporting the students to the sites is needed, as are school support services.

Accomplishments

City As School has been adopted by fifty- two schools around the country in a variety of settings. In North Carolina, a junior high school is using the model to head-off potential dropouts. In Virginia, City As School is an enrichment component for a gifted and talented program. In some cases it is a

As a result of their learning experiences in City As School, students begin to see a closer connection between the academic decisions they make and the consequences of those decisions. Most students express a feeling of control over their education that translates into more confidence in their ability to control their lives.

school within a school, in an effort to create small school environments in very large schools. In other areas the learning experiences are a diversification of the regular curriculum.

As a result of their learning experiences in City As School, students begin to see a closer connection between the academic decisions they make and the consequences of those decisions. Most students express a feeling of control over their education that translates into more confidence in their ability to control their lives. In some learning experiences, students develop a mentor relationship with an adult outside of the school.

Budget

City as School charges a fee for replicating the program, however costs for all services can be negotiated.

Replication

Some of the steps that an adopting district or school will need to take are:

- determine what student population would participate in City As School;
- set up an academic program to service those students involved with City As School;
- develop a plan to determine what Learning Experiences are available in the community;
- make arrangements with local businesses, civic groups, government agencies, or other resources that could provide a Learning Experience;
- establish prerequisites that students must have to be considered for placement in an Learning Experience; and
- determine the amount and type of credit that will be earned for each Learning Experience.

As a National Diffusion Network program, awareness materials are available at no cost. City As School will conduct training at the adopter site (2-3 days) which includes assistance in structuring the program and the actual writing of the curriculum for learning experiences. Implementation, follow-up and evaluation services are also available to adopters. A visit to the City As School site in New York or one of their regional adopter sites is advisable prior to the inservice training.

Contact

Marie Reilly
City As School
16 Clarkson Street
New York, New York 10012
(212) 645-6121

Critical Skills Program

Helping teachers adopt a "learning-by-solving-real-problems" approach in the classroom.

Location

New Hampshire and Maine.

Population Served

Teachers grades K-12.

Purpose and Goals

The Critical Skills Program is designed to help teachers incorporate the critical skills of problem solving, decision making, critical and creative thinking, communication, organization, management, leadership and independent learning within the specific content of the subjects they teach. The Critical Skills philosophy is that the acquisition of essential knowledge and the development of these critical skills are interdependent. The program focuses on helping teachers realistically develop ways to teach so that both knowledge and skills have equal importance. The instructional process developed is called Learning-by-Solving-Real-Problems. By bringing real world situations into the classroom, teachers help students realize that there are vital connections between what happens in school and what happens in the community.

Planning

The Critical Skills Program was developed ten years ago by the New Hampshire Corporate Council on Critical Skills. The Council is composed of business leaders and representatives of higher education institutions. After researching the needs of students and of public education, the Council identified the critical skills listed above and of developed the Learning-by-Real-Problems approach to teach these critical skills. After developing the program, the Corporate Council formed a partnership with Antioch-New England Graduate School to train New Hampshire teachers in the approach during six-day summer institutes and to provide follow-up classroom support at intervals during the school year. Approximately 400 New Hampshire teachers are using the critical skills approach in their classrooms and twelve Maine teachers were trained in the summer of 1989.

Critical Skills has empowered my students by astonishing them with their own abilities.
–Middle School Language Arts Teacher

Components

Summer institutes are led by New Hampshire teachers who are masters of the Learning-by-Solving-Real-Problems approach. Institute follow-up includes two to three days of training and classroom observations during the year. The institutes immerse teachers in a Learning-by-Solving-Real-Problems experience, providing an awareness of their own critical skills development. The institutes also provide teachers with the opportunity to plan for the start of the new school year.

Accomplishments

Ninety-eight percent of the teachers trained in the program remain in teaching, although almost one-third considered leaving prior to the training. Trained teachers spend 50% of classroom time on Learning-by-Solving-Real-Problems. Teachers report that students are highly motivated to learn and to accept responsibility for their own learning and their problem solving and communication

skills improve as a result of the Learning-by-Solving-Real-Problems approach. Parents report the same increased motivation and a greater ability to work with others to solve problems and feel that their children are also more self-confident. Eighty-seven percent of the parents in one survey felt that critical skills instruction should be an integral part of formal education.

Budget

Institute tuition is approximately $650 per teacher for the six-day session. The Learning-by-Solving-Real-Problems approach may be implemented in the classroom at no additional cost.

Contact

Peter Eppig
Antioch-New England Graduate School
Roxbury Street
Keene, New Hampshire 03431
(603) 357-3122

Early Intervention Reading and Language Program

Businesses and schools work with parents and preschoolers.

Location

Eddington and Clifton, Maine.

Population Served

Preschool children and their parents.

Purpose and Goals

Officials of Eddington Elementary School were concerned about the differences in life experiences that were affecting children entering kindergarten. There was a definite gap between children who had been to preschools and those from lower income families who had not. The language skills of many of the children who had not attended preschool apparently were not being developed through reading and speaking activities at home.

The Early Intervention Reading and Language Program is an effort to work with parents and grandparents of underprivileged children 0-5 years of age who live in Eddington and Clifton. The objectives of this program are to:

- stimulate language development through reading and speaking activities as precursors to the primary reading program at the Eddington school;
- develop a positive experience between the community and school through a supportive program enhancing parenting skills;
- develop specific parenting skills related to language development in children; and
- expose children to stimulating age appropriate literature in the home on a regular basis.

The children have begun identifying the school as "my school" long before they are enrolled in kindergarten.

Planning

The Early Intervention Reading and Language Program evolved in 1988 from discussions between the principal and superintendent of SAD 63 and Peavey Manufacturing and Leon Williams Lumber Company representatives. The latter were local businesses also concerned with the language skills of employees. In order to build a program involving parents and children, an incentive strong enough to bring parents into the school on a regular basis was needed. It was felt that children's clothing was an incentive that most low income families needed and a local clothing distributor agreed to supply sneakers, socks and sweatsuits. Peavey Manufacturing and Leon Williams Lumber Company financed the purchases.

Components

This is a structured educational program geared to assisting parents in reading to their children. The key components involve:

- Book Loan Program: an open book loan program that is run through the school library. A group of books was purchased for the program and parents are encourage to check them out each week. Each book includes a home activity related to the story.

- Home Visitations: home visitations by the staff assistant to help parents create an appropriate settings and times to read to their children.

- Weekly Reading Time: weekly reading time in the school during which parents and children meet with program personnel to analyze the extent of parental participation in the children's reading exposure during the prior week and to provide guidance to parents in continuing to develop their children's reading and language skills. Children meet with the principal for a story time while the parents meet with the other staff person to discuss their activities for the week. Both groups then gather for some joint activities.

- Rewards: a reward system by which families earn points toward the receipt of clothing for the children involved in the program. A parent with one child could earn a maximum of 25 points each week through such activities as reading to their child, attending the parent session, attending the reading hour with their child, and developing an additional language activity with their child at home. If more than one child in a family participates, more points can be earned. As points are accumulated, parents can redeem them for items of clothing at participating businesses.

Children who are eligible for the Early Intervention Reading and Language Program are identified through school sources and referrals from the community. These are children from economically disadvantaged families who do not attend a nursery school program.

Accomplishments

Seventeen children, accompanied by a parent or guardian, regularly attended the first session of the Early Intervention Reading and Language Program. Many of these parents had not had a positive school experience and this program began to help them overcome some of their own apprehensions about being in a school. Attendance and participation in home activities was so successful that home visits were not necessary. The children have begun identifying the school as "my school" long before they are enrolled in kindergarten. Oral interviews with parents were effective in helping the principal make adjustments in the program. As these children enter the public school system, their progress will be closely monitored to determine the long-term effectiveness of the program. At present, the enthusiasm for the program, regular attendance and desire of parents and children to return are the evaluation tools that will encourage the continuation of the program.

Budget

The cost of the program is shared between the school district and local businesses. Books and follow-up activities are covered by the local budget within the district, with $1,500 in books purchased specifically for the program. The salary for the one employee is covered by federal Chapter 1 funds received by the school. The incentive program is funded through local businesses; it totaled about $350 in the first three month session of the program.

Contact

Les Butler
Eddington Elementary School
RFD 1 Box 707
East Holden, Maine 04429
(207) 843-6010

Education is a Student's First Job

Encouraging employers to take an interest in the scholastic performance of their student employees.

Location

Biddeford and Saco, Maine.

Population Served

High school students with jobs.

Purpose and Goals

Educators in the Biddeford-Saco area felt that students were neglecting their studies because of the number of hours they were working after school. This perception was reinforced by the results of the Maine Educational Assessment test which indicate a strong negative correlation between the hours a student works and test scores. Students working over eighteen hours per week had lower scores. Employers felt that many students were not taking their work responsibilities seriously. Education is a Student's First Job is an effort to address these two concerns by showing students that there is a positive link between the work world and the academic world. By publicly recognizing school achievement and job attendance, it is hoped that:

- the business community will become more actively involved in education;
- recognition of students will enable them to feel better about themselves; and
- community aspirations will increase as people see that they can solve their own problems.

Planning

The Biddeford-Saco Aspirations Compact was formed in September, 1988 after being selected by the Maine Aspirations Compact as a pilot site for a business-education partnership. Compact members expressed some concern about the effect of students' jobs on their academic performance. A survey of students in both high schools revealed that two-thirds of the students worked twenty-one hours each week with many students working more hours.

Community response has been so positive that twenty-five businesses and more than 200 students are now involved with the program.

When the program was initiated in 1989, eight local businesses participated. Members of the compact made personal appeals to selected businesses to sign on with the program.

Components

At the end of each school quarter, participating employers complete a simple report listing all student employees, noting if they have earned honor roll status at their high school and stating the number of days tardy or absent from work during the quarter. Using that information, calculations are made for the percentage of student employees who have earned honor roll status and the percentage of student employees who have maintained full attendance at work. An ad is then prepared for the local newspaper to acknowledge:

- the firm with the highest percentage of students attaining honor roll status and listing the students' names;

- the firm with the highest attendance percentage and listing the students with 100% attendance record; and
- all employers who have participated in the program.

At the end of the year a special acknowledgement is made of the firm with the highest average for each category for the full year. A scroll listing the honor roll students and full attendance students for each employer is prepared for prominent display along with a plaque declaring "We participate in the Biddeford/Saco Aspiration Compact's 'School is a Student's First Job' Program." The Compact also hosted a breakfast to thank participating businesses.

Accomplishments

Since the start of the program, business participation has grown from fourteen businesses to twenty-five businesses and more than 200 students. This has encouraged the Biddeford-Saco Aspirations Compact to expand its activities and try to develop more community involvement in education.

Budget

The costs for the program are minimal. Approximately $200 was spent for brochures about the program, plaques and the breakfast. The *Journal Tribune* has contributed the quarter-page advertisement announcing the honor roll and attendance winners.

Contact

Wayne Sherman
Saco-Biddeford Savings Bank
254 Main Street
Biddeford, Maine 04005
(207) 284-4591

Educator-In-Residence

Providing secondary educators with summer experiences in Maine businesses.

Location

Businesses throughout Maine.

Population Served

Teachers grades 7-12.

Purpose and Goals

Educator-In-Residence is designed to develop a stronger link between current business practices and classroom teaching by promoting an exchange of insights about the educational and business worlds. Secondary educators are placed in Maine businesses for six to eight weeks in the summer to work on specific projects. The program provides an opportunity for educators to:

- expand their knowledge of career opportunities available to students;
- contribute to policy making;
- learn more about current business practices;
- upgrade technical and/or management skills; and
- gain insight into the decision making process of the host company.

Host businesses can expect the completion of a specific project by a qualified professional who has a new perspective on the business. Projects have ranged from a study of ways in which New England Telephone could expand services to small business to the development of a historical map of the Penobscot River. Businesses are responsible for developing a project that can be completed in a six to eight week period with some oversight by a senior-level staff person. They negotiate directly with the teacher concerning the assignment and remuneration.

There was learning and development of respect back and forth...It served a very useful purpose for both sides.
–Director of External Affairs, New England Telephone

Planning

The Educator-In Residence program is modeled after a program begun by Maine Savings Bank in 1984 and expanded to a statewide program by the Maine Development Foundation, a non-profit, statewide development corporation committed to promoting Maine's economic quality of life through a business-government-education partnership.

Components

The three basic components of the Educator-In-Residence program are business recruitment, educator recruitment and matching the two parties. The Foundation invites businesses to participate in the program and oversees distribution of applications to all secondary school principals and superintendents.

After businesses have developed a project and the qualifications necessary for someone to complete that project, the Foundation does a preliminary match with educators. Six to ten applications are then sent to the business for their review and interviews. Businesses do the actual selection of the educator who will be in residence with them for the summer.

Accomplishments

The program has grown from three placements the first year to placing eighteen educators in fifteen businesses in the summer of 1989. The major achievement of the program has been the development of respect and understanding between the participants and a mutually improved insight into the education and business communities. Teachers who have participated have expressed increased confidence in themselves as a result of a successful summer in the business world. They realized that they had definite skills and talents that would be well suited to business. Teachers have gone back into the classroom with more pride in their profession and additional knowledge to share with their students.

Budget

Businesses pay the salary of the educator. This is generally about $2,500 for a six-week project. Maine Development Foundation pays for the program promotion.

Evaluation

During the first two years, the Maine Development Foundation conducted the Educators-In-Residence program, informal discussions provided a means of feedback and evaluation. The program coordinator conducted individual interviews at the work site with each educator in the third year. A consultant is currently helping to develop a survey that will be distributed to all past participants in an effort to determine if the program has resulted in changes in the classroom-curriculum, different teaching methods, or attitudinal changes.

Contact

Leanne Greeley Bond
Maine Development Foundation
45 Memorial Circle
Augusta, Maine 04330
(207) 622-6345

Future Problem Solving Program

Helping students tackle the complex world.

Location

Laurinburg, North Carolina.
Local sites nationwide, including Kennebunk, Maine.

Population

Students in grades K-12.

Purpose and Goals

The Future Problem Solving Program is designed to help students develop their creative talents and apply them to the challenges that will face them in the future. Students learn a problem solving model that can be applied to any facet of life. By working in teams, students learn to work cooperatively and develop communication skills. Further, they learn to evaluate information, differentiate between fact and opinion and most importantly, learn that they can exert a substantial degree of control over decisions that affect their futures.

Planning

In 1974, Paul Torrance worked with a group of students in Athens, Georgia to create the Future Problem Solving Program. Torrance believed schools needed to do more to help students develop their creative talents and believed that students should be aware of the issues of the future. To address these concerns he taught his students the creative problem-solving process developed for business and industry. The students were so enthusiastic that over the next ten years Torrance developed materials for a year-long program.

Components

The problem solving process involves the following steps: researching the general topic; brainstorming related problems; identifying the underlying problems; brainstorming solutions to underlying problems; developing a list of criteria by which to evaluate solutions; and evaluating the solutions to choose the best one. Students work in teams of four and complete three practice booklets that contain the results of the problem solving efforts. The booklets are sent to trained teams of evaluators and scored with comments on how to improve the problem solving process. The third submission is competitive and the highest scoring teams are invited to participate in National Problem Solving Bowls. Each year the program focuses on five different topics chosen by thousands of students around the world who vote for the topics of greatest interest to them.

Programs have been developed for students in diverse circumstances:

Regular Program - described above, serves students grades 4-12.

Primary Division - same as above for younger students - no competition.

Community Problem Solving Division – students with experience in problem solving tackle issues in their own communities.

The 'Clean Up Kids' became local celebrities. Their efforts not only helped the city and state but had an uplifting effect on their school and on them personally. These kids had learned that they could make a difference"

–Program Director

Accomplishments

The program, which started as an individual classroom project, has been developed into a year-long curriculum that reaches approximately 175,000 young people all over the world. Students have succeeded in getting a toxic waste dump cleaned up, have developed a public awareness campaign about the need for recycling, and have come up with hundreds of workable solutions to the challenges society faces every day.

Budget

Registration fees for the regular program are approximately $60 per team.

Contact

Ann B. Crabbe
Future Problem Solving Program
St. Andrews College
Laurinburg, North Carolina 28352
(919) 276-8361

Penny Keating
16 High Bluff
Kennebunk, Maine 04043
(207) 883-4356

I Make the Difference

An early-education program to build student self-esteem.

Location

Livermore Falls, Maine.

Population Served

Students in grades 1-5.

Purpose and Goals

Project I Make the Difference, designed by a classroom teacher in 1988, helps improve children's self-esteem, problem solving and social skills. Students gain a sense of self-worth and learn how they influence others through a variety of classroom activities that emphasize sharing, helping, taking turns, giving and receiving compliments, resolving conflicts and coping with anger and frustration. The program is integrated into regular classroom and school activities.

Planning

This project was developed in response to a survey of students, teachers, parents and community members which indicated that low self-esteem was a problem for elementary students in Livermore Falls. Staff at the University of Maine at Farmington cooperated in designing the program and in conducting staff training. Two full workshop days and six after-school sessions for teachers focus on social skills training, cooperative learning techniques, developing clear student behavioral goals such as cooperating, sharing in games and having students take responsibility for appropriate behavior.

Components

No single approach will improve children's self-esteem, peer interaction skills and problem solving skills, but without sacrificing academic goals teachers implement a variety of classroom activities, including:

- Read Aloud Stories: children's literature is used for discussion topics focusing on issues such as friendship, peer pressure and coping with feelings of anger.
- Social Skills and Conflict Resolution Training: such as sending ignoring messages and being a good listener. Skills are modeled by teachers, then role played and practiced by students.
- Cooperative Learning: working in small groups with other students to reinforce the learning of the whole group.
- Personal Choice: helping children learn how they can take responsibility for their behavior and make constructive choices is the integrating theme.
- Recognition of Student Efforts: both classroom and school-wide efforts are made to create positive expectations for student behavior. Students who demonstrate helpful behavior and who show progress in the area of self-control and peer relationships are recognized by receiving special tokens. Each class collects tokens to contribute to a total school goal of amassing 800 tokens in order to earn a school wide activity such as an assembly program.

Students are learning to be responsible for their own behavior.
–Superintendent

- Staff Development: training a core of teachers who implement the program and train new faculty members.

Accomplishments

A decrease in playground fights, arguments during unstructured time and inappropriate hallway behavior has been achieved. Students learn that they can take personal responsibility and make a difference in how they influence themselves and others. There is more communication with parents as teachers report examples of positive behavior. The number of parent volunteers in the school has increased. Teachers work together to identify meaningful solutions for teaching and disciplinary problems. Because of the initial success of the project in grades 3-5, it has been extended to also include grades 1-2.

Budget

The cost of teacher training was initially provided by a DECS Innovative Grant. Program costs are now incorporated into the regular school budget.

Replication

Staff have trained teachers in Jay and Dixfield and are available to help other districts implement the program. This project can apply to all settings in which raising student self-esteem is a priority.

Contact

Jeannine Backus
Livermore Falls Grammar School
Cedar Street
Livermore Falls, Maine 04254
(207) 897-3325

Independent Study Week

An opportunity for students to create their own learning experiences within the community.

Location

Rumford and Mexico, Maine.

Population Served

Students in grades 10-12.

Purpose and Goals

Independent Study Week is an opportunity for every student to spend a concentrated period of uninterrupted time learning about a topic, problem or career of particular interest. The program involves students, parents, teachers and people in the community, all of whom become integrally involved in helping the student respond to the challenge of designing a personal learning experience. An entire week of school time is given to independent work by the students. No regular classes are held. No bells ring to announce the beginning or end of learning periods. Because some students learn best by reading, others by observing and others by doing, Independent Study Week provides each student flexibility. The challenge for each student is to design a study project that is at the same time enjoyable, worthwhile and relevant to individual interests and needs.

Planning

Independent Study Week began in 1976 as a means of helping students to broaden their career horizons. Because the paper mill plays a vital role in the community, many students were not even considering the possibilities of other types of work, even with a decline in the available jobs at the mill. The principal worked with a group of local businesses and professional people to develop a plan for career explorations for high school students.

Most students have developed a better understanding of their community, while teachers had the opportunity to see some of their students in a very different perspective.

Components

A worksheet and a formal contract are the two tools that each student utilizes throughout Independent Study Week. A worksheet is the preliminary guide through the planning process and establishes the objectives of the project. With the assistance of a teacher-advisor, the student begins planning the project with these questions:

- Can the project be a valid, valuable learning experience if carried out as planned?
- Does the project really warrant a week of full-time study or effort?
- Is the student sincerely interested in this area?

The non-school supervisor must accept the worksheet before a contract can be signed.

The contract is signed by the student, parents, school teacher-advisor and non-school supervisor. It clearly states the nature of the student's project, the days and hours to be worked or spent studying, the people with whom the student will be working and to whom the student is responsible, the means of transportation to and from the project site and any other details of the project.

The contract specifies what form of evidence the student will be required to produce to verify that the project has been completed. This can range from the signature of the supervising person to elaborate reports, tapes, illustrations or journals documenting the project as determined by the student and advisor. The teacher-advisor monitors the student's progress throughout the week and evaluates the project.

Accomplishments

During Independent Study Week, most students have developed a better understanding of their community, while teachers have had the opportunity to see some of their students in a very different perspective. Some students found that they actually did not like a career they had planned to pursue. Others have really tried to explore new worlds. Over the years, six students who have worked with a local optometrist have become optometrists!

Independent Study Week also provides the school system with an opportunity to give the ninth grade students an intensive Drug and Alcohol Awareness program.

Budget

All work takes place during the regular school schedule and businesses donate their time. Incidental costs of printing contracts and information sheets are picked up by the school.

Evaluation

Each year the program is examined by means of teacher-advisor evaluations of the student projects and informal feedback from the community.

Contact

Tom Rowe
Mountain Valley High School
Hancock Street
Rumford, Maine 04276
(207) 364-4547

Mastery Learning

Helping all children to learn through a whole-class mastery approach.

Location

Red Bank, New Jersey.

Population Served

Students in grades K-8.

Purpose and Goals

Red Bank is a pre-kindergarten to eighth grade school district with two schools, about 850 students and 70 certified staff. In 1978, an outcome-based instructional delivery system was adopted by the school system based on the following:

- Many students graduating from the 8th grade were two or three years below grade level on standardized achievement tests.
- Per-pupil costs ranked in New Jersey's 93rd percentile but achievement test scores were among the state's lowest.
- Other instructional models had been tried without success.
- Teacher expectations were low for minority students, over 60% of the student population.

The mastery learning was implemented to allow all students to successfully learn the intended curriculum before moving on to the next curriculum unit or grade.

Planning

After some research by the superintendent and school board, a mastery learning consultant was hired to provide teachers with twelve days of inservice training, with additional sessions for administrators. During the first year of implementation, all teachers constructed and taught one learning unit (2-3 weeks) in reading or math using the mastery learning model. In 1980, all teachers were using the model in reading, language arts and math. All subjects are now organized and taught following the mastery learning model.

Schools are to teach students not to sort them. Every child must have the opportunity to learn and will learn.

Teachers are held accountable for teaching the grade-level units. The initial belief of the administration was that if teachers saw students achieving on a higher level than previously expected of the students, then the teachers' expectations for student achievement would change considerably.

Components

The first step in implementation is the development of a series of objectives for reading and math that represent what teachers believed all children should learn .

Next, a plan for teaching those objectives is developed. The curriculum is organized into learning units taught over a two to four week period. Each learning unit has a topic, objective and instructional activities. Red Bank teachers have developed their own supplementary materials and do not rely on a single text or basal series.

Teachers follow a teach-test-reteach/ enrich-retest model using teacher-paced, whole class instruction. Classes are organized heterogeneously and all children are instructed using grade-level objectives. If a 7th grade student is working at the 4th grade level, that student was still given 7th grade reading objectives. As a class, students proceed through pre-planned learning units in each subject area.

Once the initial teaching is finished, the formative test is administered. The formative test provides early feedback and an early opportunity for correction; it is not a graded exercise. On the basis of the formative assessment, enrichment activities are provided for those students who have mastered the material, and corrective activities are prescribed for those students who have not. A mastery test is administered to all students at the end of the unit in order to certify learning. Special sessions with remedial teachers or additional work are provided for those students not mastering the material the second time.

Accomplishments

The success of mastery learning lies in a values orientation of the entire school staff. In Red Bank, the staff believes that schools are to teach students not to sort them. Every child must have the opportunity to learn and will learn.

There were several key factors leading to staff acceptance of the mastery learning program at Red Bank, including

- The school board and administration believe that all children can master the curriculum. They have maintained their support of continued implementation and funding. Early release time is provided for continued staff development, and all teachers on a grade level are given a common planning period.

- Continued staff development has enabled teachers to buy into and institutionalize the mastery learning concept. A facilitator was brought in to give the initial training to teachers and administrators, and teachers were directly involved from day one in planning and revising mastery learning units and curriculum. One teacher from each school is released full time to assist the principal in on-going implementation. A curriculum director was also hired to monitor and support the program.

- Mastery learning is part of school management. Job descriptions have been revised to use terminology of mastery learning and written curriculum and evaluation documents focus on mastery learning. A system of management by objectives is implemented for administrators which provided accountability for program implementation and a portion of administrative raises is determined by achieving objectives.

- Early evidence of increasing test scores was an immediate reward for the efforts of the staff and incentive to continue the implementation of mastery learning.

Budget

Both start-up and maintenance costs have been absorbed by local funds. Start-up costs included consultant fees for staff training and summer release time for teachers. Maintenance costs include salaries for a teacher in each school who is released to provide support for the program and some summer planning time for teachers.

Evaluation

The Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT), a standardized achievement test, was the basis for the initial evaluation of the success of mastery learning in Red Bank. The average total grade-equivalent scores on the MAT increased 20% between 1980, the first year of mastery learning, and 1986. In 1987, Red Bank changed to the California Achievement Test, so comparisons to the most recent test scores cannot be made. Today mastery learning is so deeply entrenched in the system that the staff and community of Red Bank no longer view see it as a special program.

Contact

David Squires
Red Bank School Department
76 Branch Avenue
Red Bank, New Jersey 07701
(201) 219-1857

Math-Science Scholars Program

A summer enrichment program to encourage more Maine students to pursue careers in math and science.

Location

Hebron, Maine.

Population Served

Students in grades 11 and 12.

Purpose and Goals

The Math-Science Scholars Program (MSSP) is designed to challenge talented public school students in areas outside their regular high school curriculum. It is a rigorous five-week residential summer program on the campus of Hebron Academy, a private college preparatory boarding school. The goals of the program are to:

- raise the aspirations of students who might otherwise miss the opportunity to realize their full leadership potential;
- close the math-science gender gap;
- inspire questions and ideas about the world around us;
- prepare students for college life; and
- provide public school teachers a unique teaching/learning experience.

The Math-Science Scholars Program is a response to the need for some students to receive a greater emphasis on science in our secondary schools and the need to develop more science and engineering students in Maine. In a 1988 survey by the Corporation for Enterprise Development, Maine ranked last in the country in the number of science and engineering students.

Planning

Co-sponsored by Hebron Academy and the Maine Center for Educational Services, MSSP is modeled after the Connecticut Scholars Program, a National Diffusion Network program developed in Connecticut. Representatives from Connecticut came to Hebron in May, 1988 to discuss the program with a group of Maine educators. Interest in the concept led to the creation of an advisory board, a visit to Connecticut in July, and the hiring of a program coordinator.

This is the most exciting program I've ever been involved in. I've learned a lot and made a lot of new friends. I can't wait to come back!
-MSSP Student

Components

The major elements of the program include:

- rigorous academic course work;
- faculty drawn from both public and private schools; and
- a residential environment which includes social and recreational opportunities.

Each scholar takes two major courses, one in math or computer science and one in science, and a writing course. Classes meet six days a week for five weeks (the first week of July through the first week of August). Mathematics courses emphasize problem solving and the use of imaginative and critical approaches to new concepts; computer science courses focus on structured programming and problem-solving strategies; and science courses emphasize laboratory experimentation and frequent in-class demonstrations by faculty.

The academic program is supplemented by various field trips, a special guest lecture series by prominent scientists and educators from the area, and a variety of social, recreational and cultural activities. Students also have the opportunity to visit Maine colleges and talk with their representatives.

Faculty for the program is drawn from the ranks of teachers in both private and public secondary schools in Maine. Selected on the basis of a course abstract, resume and personal interviews, the Math-Science Scholars Program provides public school teachers a unique learning experience within a totally different teaching environment. The faculty has an opportunity to select and design courses that they may not be able to teach during the regular school year. Interns, college students majoring in math and science, assist the faculty and live with the scholars, serving as role models and mentors.

Students are selected by guidance counselors and math and science teachers from their high school. The criteria are a demonstrated motivation and ability in math and science as well as a high level of curiosity. Most are planning to go to college but may lack the confidence in their ability to succeed in a rigorous academic program. Seventeen students from thirteen Maine high schools attended the first summer program.

Accomplishments

Being with a group of people with similar academic abilities and aspirations helped these students to feel that they belonged. Very strong friendships developed among the scholars and the interns. They have requested a reunion during the school year, as well as newsletters so that they can keep in touch with each other. Students expressed more confidence in their anticipated success in college. Parents and students felt better prepared for the transition to college. All of the students have expressed the desire to return in the summer of 1990.

Budget

The cost of the program in 1989, the pilot year, was about $2,000 per student. Of this amount, $1,300 was raised through private grants from the Jesse Cox Foundation, the Maine Community Foundation, Central Maine Power Company, Digital Equipment Corporation, Hebron Academy and the Maine Center for Educational Services. The remaining $700 per student was paid either by their parents, the sending high schools or a combination of both sources. A $110 book and activity fee is also paid by the parents.

Evaluation

Evaluation is based on pre- and post-surveys of student attitudes toward school, college plans, program expectation and an assessment of all components of the program. Faculty and interns complete a similar post-session evaluation. Plans also call for follow-up information from school personnel and the students about the perceived impact that the program had on the student and their actual college attendance and academic concentration.

Contact

Robert G. Shafto
Maine Center for Educational Services
P.O. Box 620
Auburn, Maine 04212-0620
(207) 783-0833

One-Minute Messages

Pocket sized cards relaying concise messages about a school district's achievements.

Location

Shawnee Mission, Kansas.

Population Served

The entire community.

Purpose and Goals

The underlying philosophy of One-Minute Messages is that educators need to develop effective ways to communicate with the public. Education is undergoing many changes as research produces evidence of how we learn and changing technology produces new ways of learning. However, public schools are the one institution that Americans feel they know very well, so it is difficult for the public to accept changes in something that is so familiar. One-Minute Messages provide an opportunity for schools to explain an issue in enough detail to help people understand it without overwhelming them with information.

Strong lines of communication are needed to build community and parent support for schools. Educators need to take the initiative to tell the busy people of their community the good news about what students and staff are doing. Newsletters have become very popular as a means of keeping parents informed and One-Minute Messages are an additional source of quick and accurate information.

Planning

In 1987, the Shawnee Mission Public School District was trying to pass a bond proposal for new schools. The superintendent wanted to get information out to the public in a quick but precise way. This lead to the creation of One-Minute Messages, so named because the information contained on the card can easily be read in one minute.

Educators need to take the initiative to tell the busy people of their community the good news about what students and staff are doing.

Components

One-Minute Messages are 6x5" cards folded in half with narrative and/or statistical information inside about the school district or a particular curriculum area. These cards are then distributed to members of the community and anyone needing information about the schools. In Shawnee Mission the cards can be found in all school buildings and public libraries and are included in information packets about the school system.

Accomplishments

Shawnee Mission did pass the bond proposal in 1987 and the One-Minute Message was so well received that the superintendent expanded the messages to include each curriculum area. The staff feels that they are an effective means of relaying the school's achievements and generating school support. There have been fifteen messages to date.

Budget

Any member of the staff can write a One-Minute Message about their program or curriculum area. Shawnee Mission now has a Public Relations Director who is responsibility for the design and printing. Costs are determined by use of in-house staff and printing or contracting for those services.

A Sample One-Minute Message from Shawnee Mission

The 1988 "Report Card" Is In For The Shawnee Mission Secondary Reorganization:

Looking Good!

Reorganization: Year Two

SM's secondary reorganization is one of the most scrutinized such transitions ever to take place. According to the fifth (and final) report examining the implementation, "overwhelming evidence" indicates that after two years of middle school, 9th graders are "well prepared for the demands of high school." Ninth graders are more involved in athletics and activities, better behaved, and are performing as well academically as they did in the junior high system. The improvement in the behavior of 9th graders is "hardly short of miraculous," says the report. Only the senior class has fewer suspendable offenses.

Academics Improve

Academically the picture is positive also. Last year's 9th graders, who spent the 8th grade in the first year of reorganization, performed better on the Test of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP) than either of the two previous classes of 9th graders (who had been prepared in the now defunct junior high schools). This was true in reading, math, expression, science and social studies subtests.

Student semester exam scores in English and mathematics have remained virtually unchanged, while science scores have shown dramatic improvements: the number of A's and B's have increased from 14% to 53%. Additionally, the number of 9th graders with failing grades is down by 18%. "The overall pattern of evidence suggests," says the report, "that the 9th graders are doing as well or better in the senior high schools than they did in the (former) junior high schools."

Successful New Programs

Another success of the reorganization is the homebase advisory program which the report finds possesses "flashes of excellence." Extra-curricular participation has blossomed, hundreds of students now join in intramural sports and clubs. The middle school emphasis of "encouraging interest in extra-curricular pastimes is also paying dividends in the high schools: 9th grade participation has nearly doubled to 51%, and 92% of these students give their activities "high marks."

Patrons Rate Reorganization: *Passing the Test!*

Implementing a change as ambitious as the SM reorganization was a challenge. Philosophically, structurally, academically, the entire system was reconsidered from A to Z.

Several components of the new system receive high "marks" from parents, including home/school communication, the positive school atmosphere, the well balanced curriculum, appropriate elective programs, solid academics and the overall climate of cooperation and success. Of 25 items on a questionnaire given to parents, the reorganized system was rated "high" on 20, "neutral" on five, and "negative" on none. Also, parents rated 24 of the items higher in 1987-88 than the year earlier. Significantly, of the few who did express criticism, there was no consensus of complaint. Nearly every criticism was countered by a contradictory complaint (i.e., schools are too challenging/slack, lenient/strict, adult/"babying").

Contact

Raj Chopra
Shawnee Mission Public Schools
McEachen Administrative Center
7235 Antioch
Shawnee Mission, Kansas 66204-1798
(913) 677-6447

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Project Adventure

An exploration of academic disciplines and "hands-on" experiences, combined with physical education and guidance.

Location

Hamilton, Massachusetts and various Maine sites.

Population Served

Students in grades 6-12.

Purpose and Goals

For many students, learning is a passive process offering little opportunity to take responsible action or to test ideas in the real world. Project Adventure is designed to provide physical challenges, risk-taking and problem-solving activities which are outside the normal pattern of student activities in most schools. The Adventure approach, first developed in 1969, is active and engaging, using exploration and discussion as keys to activities. An atmosphere of mutual support and cooperation is developed. An alternative physical education program using a ropes course can be part of the program. Project Adventure represents a combination of Outward Bound techniques and philosophy with a group problem-solving approach to learning and teaching. The teacher's role is to state the problem and the limits, giving students the responsibility for finding solutions. This approach encompasses and supports a wide variety of teaching and learning styles.

Planning

The project offers three initial training programs for staff: academic; counseling techniques; and physical education.

Participants may choose to be trained in one, two or all three components of the program. These workshops give teachers and counselors skills in program management, teaching strategies to link course content to hands-on activities, and techniques necessary for implementation. Ideally, a core group of teachers from a single school attends a five day workshop. Follow-up sessions and assistance with construction of the ropes course may also be part of the adoption process. A supportive school administration must be willing to incorporate new teaching styles and programs and provide flexibility in scheduling. No special facilities are needed, although the ropes course apparatus for the physical education program calls for some open space around playing fields or in a wooded area. No special staffing is needed since regular classroom teachers are trained to implement the program.

With encouragement from others far below, a high school sophomore edges off a high platform, leaving uncertainty behind on the thrill of a free rappel. . .

Components

The three components of Project are:

- Physical education: a semester or year-long curriculum which develops balance, coordination, agility and a willingness to trust and to try. The curriculum is taught through innovative activities such as group problem-solving and building and using a ropes course, an outdoor apparatus made of logs, swings, ropes and cables suspended at varying heights.

- Academics: groups of students learn by actually working on specific tasks or problems in the

community and the natural environment. They may collect data in a salt marsh, learn first-hand about supply and demand from talking to a fisherman, or explore developmental psychology by working with young children. The Adventure approach can flexibly be applied to academic areas for varying amounts of time.

- Guidance: through an emphasis on structured group discussion, coupled with the use of carefully designed group initiatives and ropes course activities, each group member learns to look at his/her own defenses. Students learn how to react to conflicts as well as to understand factors that have either encouraged or prevented them from having satisfying relationships. This supportive success-oriented approach helps develop self-confidence and positive coping strategies for peer and adult relationships.

Accomplishments

Project Adventure educates the whole student by using sound academic and physical learning activities which enhance self-esteem. The project's strengths are its flexibility, the variety and quality of its curriculum models and its ability to inspire and rekindle the enthusiasm of both teachers and students.

Evaluation

Formal statistical evaluation at the developer site in Hamilton, Massachusetts showed student improvement in self-concept, physical functioning, academic competence and openness to change. Parent questionnaires noted "growing enthusiasm" and "a more positive attitude" among their children. Anecdotal materials and journal entries are also used in program evaluation.

Budget

The four-day residential teacher training program, taken in Massachusetts, costs about $500 per person. Additional costs may include transportation, substitutes and camping equipment, depending on the curriculum developed. Project Adventure consultants are available to work at the adopter site with up to twelve trainees and charge $400 a day plus expenses. In-state training is also offered periodically through the Maine Center for Educational Services at a cost of about $250 per person.

Replication

Project Adventure is a National Diffusion Network approval program and descriptive materials are available at no cost. Visitors are welcome by appointment at the project site and at demonstration sites in other states. Liability insurance is available to schools adopting the program.

Contact

In Maine:
Kayda Selby
Maine Center for Educational Services
P.O. Box 620
Auburn, Maine 04212-0620
(207) 783-0833

In Massachusetts:
Dick Prouty
Project Adventure, Inc.
P.O. Box 100
Hamilton, Massachusetts 01936
(508) 468-7981

PROJECT LEAD: Leadership Experience And Development

Leadership training and hands-on community service for students.

Location

Sites nationwide.

Population Served

Students in grades 8-12.

Purpose and Goals

Community service projects can bridge the generation gap by providing opportunities for adults and teens to work together. The goals of Project LEAD are to provide opportunities for students who are not usually selected for leadership roles and to develop a commitment to volunteerism and community service among young people.

Planning

Project LEAD, launched in 1984, is a cooperative venture of the Association of Junior Leagues and Quest International, an educational research and curriculum development organization. The first step in developing the program is to find a group of adults interested in guiding students in a community service project. Project LEAD is usually introduced to interested parties by a Junior League. However, the program can be sponsored by schools, service organizations or businesses.

Components

Each Project LEAD team consists of an adult team leader (usually a volunteer from a community service organization), a teacher or counselor and four students. Through a series of training workshops conducted by a LEAD trainer, each team learns to conduct a needs assessment in its community, to develop broad support for its goals, to recruit other students and to implement its service project in the community or the school. This process puts students in touch with public officials and business leaders and allows students to build ownership in their project from the beginning.

Past projects have included: construction of a playground for a center where battered women and children are sheltered; a latch-key program for young school age children; a hotline for teen suicide; service as literacy volunteers; and building a home for a homeless man.

Accomplishments

A successful Project LEAD team becomes the catalyst for other teams to develop within the school and community. The training provided for the initial team enables them to train other teams and as one project is completed, the teams can move on to another project. The program has witnessed real increases in student self-esteem as the teams see their work become a reality.

Project LEAD made me stop and look at the world around me. I was forced to think of the needs of others and to put myself second – something most of us forget to do. Our project made me give a part of myself, and I received so much in return.

-Project LEAD student leader

Budget

Project LEAD charges a first year fee of $7,500, which includes all promotional and training materials and trainer fees. In the second year, one of the community leaders attends a three-day workshop to become a certified Project LEAD trainer at a cost of $750. Thereafter, a yearly participation fee of $150 covers the cost of all new materials.

Contact

Greg Long
Project LEAD
Quest International
537 Jones Road
PO Box 566
Granville, Ohio 43023-0566
(800) 288-6401

Project RECON: Rural Educators On-Line Network

A collaboration designed to increase telecommunication skills of students in rural schools.

Location

Milo, Maine and other rural Maine schools.

Population Served

Students in grades 6-12.

Purpose and Goals

It is often difficult for libraries in small rural schools and communities to provide students with access to research materials, current information or comprehensive bibliographies. Project RECON was developed to overcome the isolation of rural students by helping them and their teachers access information available through telecommunications networks and to improve technological literacy. Through the project, subject area teachers and the school computer coordinator create telecommunications activities that are integrated with the school curriculum, allowing students to see the relevance of learning electronic information retrieval skills and their application in research projects. At one school, the training was incorporated into science classes when students were preparing science fair projects. Students were taught how to structure a search, the technicalities of on-line work, and efficient search strategies for use in researching their projects.

Planning

With a DECS Innovative Grant, the assistance of UNUM in Portland, and training facilities at New England Telephone in Lewiston, five rural school districts around the state formed the cooperative called RECON: Rural Educators On-line Network in 1988 to bring telecommunications capabilities to rural schools at a reasonable cost. Each member school sent representatives to training sessions on the use of DIALOG (Classroom Instruction Program and Classmate Program). Media center directors set up on-line computers in school libraries, expanding the research resources available to students.

UNUM provided the electronic switching for telecommunication lines in the first year of the project, since long-distance telephone rates and on-line time costs of information services can be prohibitive for already stretched school budgets. In the second year, DIALOG, a subscription data base, provided an 800 number for school use.

The RECON Steering Committee acts as a training and support group for other members. It meets periodically to make policy decisions, share notes on progress, problems, and successes, and to evaluate cost and network effectiveness.

Project staff report that telecommunications has changed the very nature of the teaching process by making more information accessible to students.

Components

Six school districts were originally involved in the planning; eleven are now members. Network participants include: Union 42 and CSD 10 in Readfield;, SAD 48 (Newport); SAD 68 (Dover-Foxcroft); Raymond; SAD 43 (Rumford/Mexico); Union 44 and CSD 15 in Sabattus; SAD 4 (Guilford); SAD 56 (Searsport); SAD 46 (Dexter); and Greenville. Project initiatives include:

- improving the technological literacy of teachers and students through workshops and support;
- providing forty hours a year of on-line time and training in the use of DIALOG Information Service;
- teaching students the on-line skills needed to make use of on-line information capabilities;
- planning telecommunication activities in cooperation with classroom teachers that enhance the curriculum and make telecommunication skills meaningful;
- developing an electronic data base to share projects and activities created by members; and
- introducing the National Geographic KidsNetwork programs at the elementary and middle schools to help develop higher level thinking skills. This network links students from all over the world with a national data bank for scientific investigation.

Accomplishments

Project staff report that telecommunications has changed the very nature of the teaching process by making more information accessible to students. Workshops have led to an increase in the number of classroom teachers and students who use the system. Grades 4-6 students in the KidsNetwork program are involved in scientific inquiry. They collect information which is processed and returned so that they can make and test hypotheses. Students are gathering information on acid rain and lead in drinking water as part of a national study. High school students use the information service for research.

Originally designed to serve the high school level, the project is being expanded to include the elementary grades, starting with grade four.

Budget

Membership in RECON costs $1,000 per district.

Contact

Shelley Swazey
Penquis Valley High School
35 Main Street
Milo, Maine 04463
(207) 943-7346

Reflections

An adult reading and discussion program to promote family literacy.

Location

Bangor, Berwick, Lewiston, Machias, Norway, Presque Isle and Portland.

Population Served

Adult new readers with young children.

Purpose and Goals

An estimated 110,000 adults in Maine are functionally illiterate and only 6% of these people are currently enrolled in programs to improve their reading skills, with most of these efforts generally information and task oriented. Adult new readers, however, need to progress from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." As children, these adults usually were not read to or exposed to the world of children's literature. This cycle of illiteracy is usually continued in their own families. Reflections was developed to try to break this cycle: it is a family literacy project aimed at adult new readers who are learning to read in an adult basic education program or a literacy volunteer program with the assistance of a tutor.

The major goals of Reflections are to:

- stimulate adult new readers and their tutors to explore and learn about the world of children's literature through discussion groups held at public libraries;
- enhance cooperation and communication between local libraries and local literacy providers;
- encourage adult new readers to read to their children; and
- encourage continued use of libraries by new readers in order to further their exploration of the humanities.

Planning

Reflections is modeled after two successful family literacy projects. Connections, a 1986 project in Vermont, was a reading and discussion program to encourage adult new readers, tutors and community members to read and discuss historical fiction and books about friendship. The second project was sponsored by Boston University and the Brighton branch of the Boston Public Library. It emphasized the importance of the parent-child transfer of literacy and the value of families reading together.

Giving each person the books to keep at home was really a wonderful addition to many homes where books are not part of the household.
-Lewiston Adult Learning Center staffer

Components

The Reflections program consists of biweekly discussion groups involving a maximum of fifteen people, including the series scholar, adult readers and their tutors. A minimum of three sessions is recommended to allow the group to become comfortable with each other and the material. It is important to emphasize that these are discussion groups, not lectures.

The key components of the program are:

- Discussion Series Scholar: this person will be key to the success of the program because of their contact with the participants. The scholar should be knowledgeable of the topic, have good group discussion skills and have an understanding of adult new reader characteristics and needs.

- Book Ownership: books are purchased and given to participants. Many adult new readers have never owned a book; they are either too expensive or the local library presents an image of a place where only "readers" go. Adult new readers who become comfortable with a book will be more apt to read it to their children.

- Different Reading Levels: books are selected for different beginning, intermediate and advanced reading levels. In some cases tutors may read the advanced level books with the participants. It is important to have books at a level the readers are comfortable with and will be able to share with their children.

- Participant Selection: adult readers are recruited either by an adult basic education instructor, adult education director, or a literacy volunteer. This makes it easier to ascertain the reading level of the participants and to provide a support network to help the participant through the program. It is preferable that the participants be the parents of young children so that they will want to continue the program at home.

Accomplishments

The most important accomplishment of Reflections is that the children of the participants now have the opportunity for shared reading time with their parents. The use of libraries as meeting places also helped to reacquaint librarians with adult education programs and focused attention on the needs of the adult learner.

Budget

Reflections was initially funded by the Maine Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities. When replicating the budget on a local level, the major costs are for the scholar and related expenses ($500), administrative expenses ($300) and books ($270).

Replication

The Maine Literacy Coalition has developed a detailed handbook for those communities interested in beginning a Reflections program: *A Guide to Adult New Reader Humanities-Based Reading Programs in Public Libraries.*

A major conclusion of the pilot projects was that there is no single way to hold a reading discussion series. Flexibility is a key to success. Consider the special needs of your audience and adapt the program accordingly.

Contact

Larinda Meade
Department of Educational &
Cultural Services
State House Station 23
Augusta, Maine 04333
(207) 289-5854

Student Leadership Workshop

Building student leadership skills by providing group process training to students and faculty.

Location

Bethel, Maine.

Population Served

Students in grades 9-12 and faculty.

Purpose and Goals

The Student Leadership Workshop is designed to strengthen leadership and group process skills in students from Telstar High School and Gould Academy, to increase interaction between the two schools, and to combat student apathy. The principals of the two schools, realizing that both had common needs, initiated the program in 1988.

Student Leadership Workshop provides group activities involving students and faculty. These activities focus on: learning models of leadership and practicing more effective ways of leading; enhancing skills of listening, feedback and clear communication; building self-awareness and self-confidence; learning to understand groups; and understanding gender differences and social conditioning.

Planning

The NTL Institute (National Training Labs) in Bethel provided expertise in human relations skills and leadership development. Before the leadership program was created, NTL trainers had worked with seniors at Gould. A team composed of administrators and students from both schools and NTL staff planned the project using local resources for the first year. Forty-eight students in grades 9-12 and eight faculty, half from each school, took part in the program.

Components

An initial three-day workshop is offered for students and faculty at the beginning of the school year. The workshop, facilitated by NTL trainers, focuses on communicating for action: how to motivate and lead when faced with passivity, apathy or negativism. The group works as a whole and also breaks into smaller core groups with two teachers and a facilitator. The program initially included student leaders, such as class officers and proctors, but has been expanded to include the general student body. School staff are part of the core group with the students and have an opportunity to learn group process skills.

A one-day, mid-year follow-up helps recharge enthusiasm and allows students and faculty to assess the effects of their experience and receive follow-up training.

Accomplishments

After the workshop, student leaders are increasingly responsible for planning, organizing and facilitating meetings in their schools. Students plan and follow through on projects with less supervision. Student leaders facilitate the Telstar

Not only did the workshop teach me about others, it also taught me a great deal about myself. In the workshop I had to look at myself in an objective way and see my strengths and weaknesses, accept them and know how they affect others. This was not an easy thing to do, but I feel that I have become a stronger person as a result.

- A student participant

freshman orientation program. Students have developed a base for positive interaction between the two schools. Faculty members who participated in the training have used facilitation skills in classroom and work situations during the year.

Evaluation

A designated observer and the planning team evaluate the training events and the behavioral changes resulting from participation in the program. The observer surveys participant's attitudes and reactions at the beginning, the middle and the end of the workshop and again later in the school year. The planning team uses this information both to document the impact of the program and to make any changes that seem necessary.

Budget

The program was initially funded by a $9,000 DECS Innovative Grant. The major on-going budget expense is for trainers from NTL and to provide housing and meals during the session.

Replication

NTL trainers are available to tailor this program to meet local needs, either within one school or by linking neighboring schools.

Contact

Ted Davis
Telstar High School
Bethel, Maine 04217
(207) 824-2136

Lorenzo Baker
Gould Academy
Bethel, Maine 04217
(207) 824-2161

TESA: Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement

Training designed to help teachers increase student participation in class and improve academic performance.

Location

Buckfield, Maine.

Population Served

Teachers and underachieving students.

Purpose and Goals

In 1987, the SAD 39 school system concluded that more had to be done to reach out to students who had low academic expectations and who were not motivated to participate in classroom activities. Those students who were not participating or preparing for classroom assignments were shut out of class discussions, resulting in lower academic performance. The superintendent was familiar with the TESA program and felt it would be an excellent means of empowering teachers to include all students in classroom discussions.

Planning

TESA is a nationally-documented program with a well-designed planning and implementation process. It evolved from a three-year study testing the hypothesis that if teachers practiced specific motivating and supportive interactions more frequently with low achieving students, statistically significant academic growth would be the result. TESA's timeline allows six months to one year for building teacher interest and support through a series of meetings to develop an awareness of the program, train the coordinators and develop support teams. When the plan is in place, five workshops are scheduled over a five week period to train teachers in the specific skills. As with any new program, success depends on the teachers' belief in the effectiveness of the new skills and on-going support to use these skills in the classroom.

Two staff members (one teacher and one administrator) should be selected to receive the TESA coordinator training so that they can then conduct training for all faculty within the district. These individuals should be experienced in leading staff development activities or have demonstrated the potential for doing so.

Components

TESA training gives teachers strategies and skills that enable them to call on previously low achieving students to answer questions, express ideas or give opinions as frequently as high achieving students. Fifteen separate interactions have been identified as supportive and motivating techniques for use by teachers. These are divided into three strands:

- Response Opportunities: asking higher level questions and assuring that there is an equitable distribution of response opportunities for all students;
- Feedback: (low achievers receive enthusiastic feedback as often as high achievers; and
- Personal Regard: teacher moves within three or four feet of the student in order to increase the student's attention.

During workshops, teachers learn the techniques through demonstration and

TESA and peer coaching are now components of the professional certification process in SAD 39 and TESA training is now a condition of employment for new members of the staff.

role playing activities. A three-week period in which participants observe each other a minimum of four times follows the workshop. The observer simply records the frequency of interactions occurring with target students and shares the observation data with the teacher.

Accomplishments

SAD 39 is in the staff development phase of TESA and hopes to see improved test scores in the future. The following benefits are already apparent:

- improved communication between administrators and teachers;
- improved communication between elementary and secondary staff;
- increased teacher focus on teaching styles; and
- increased opportunities for the development of teacher-peer coaching.

In the second year of TESA, two staff members were trained as peer coaches and are training other members of the staff. TESA and peer coaching are now components of the professional certification process in SAD 39 and TESA training is now a condition of employment for new members of the staff.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the first objective, increasing teacher/student interactions, is achieved through the observations conducted by other teachers. Evaluation of the second objective, increasing student test scores, is achieved through pre-post standardized tests. The test used is left to the discretion of the school.

Budget

Start-up costs will vary depending on the selected workshop design. Workshops may be conducted on school time, as dinner workshops, on shortened days or immediately after school. Those conducted on school time or as dinner workshops have proven to be significantly more successful than those conducted on shortened days or immediately after school. Obviously, the observing/coding component must be conducted on school time.

The degree to which substitute teachers are used to release teachers to attend workshops or observe peers will determine the major costs. SAD 39 costs the first year were about $7,000 for training, meals, materials and substitute teachers.

Replication

The following recommendations for those schools planning to undertake TESA training are based on the experiences of SAD 39:

- A school district should have its own team of trainers – a teacher and an administrator.
- Administration must commit to implementation very quickly after introducing the program and training a team.
- Administration must assist in the scheduling of observations.
- The school board and administration must clearly state that this is not an evaluation process but a peer observation and support process.
- The training team must listen to staff comments (formal and informal) about the program and process.

Contact

Scott Myers
SAD 39
P.O. Box 190
Buckfield, Maine 04220
(207) 336-2666

Upward Bound

Assisting economically disadvantaged youths to successfully enter and complete programs of higher education.

Location

University of Maine campuses at Orono, Farmington and Presque Isle; Bowdoin College, Brunswick.

Population Served

Students in grades 10-12.

Purpose and Goals

Maine is one of the ten lowest ranking states in the country in the percentage of its youth who graduate from high school and go on to and complete post-secondary education, yet our increasingly technological society requires workers with a higher educational level than ever before. As a result, employers have difficulty finding enough adequately prepared workers, and the labor pool is expected to shrink further in the coming decade.

One of the largest untapped pools of potential employees in Maine lies among the disadvantaged; people whose aspirations are generally low; who see few career and lifestyle options for themselves; and whose educations end at high school graduation or earlier. For twenty-four years, Upward Bound has been addressing the needs of members in this group with the potential to complete a college education. Most of the students in Upward Bound are from families receiving some form of public assistance. Upward Bound enables young people to be succeed in college and to become productive, tax-paying citizens. Students are referred to Upward Bound through their schools by teachers, guidance counselors or students already in the program. The University of Maine and Bowdoin projects each serve 100 students; the University of Maine at Farmington and the University of Maine at Presque Isle annually serve sixty each.

The magic of Upward Bound is that kids have time during the school year with people from outside who care about them. They feel special because someone believes they have potential.
–Director, Upward Bound

Planning

Upward Bound is sponsored by the College of Education of the University of Maine System and by the U.S. Department of Education. Students are recruited after completing their freshman year or during their sophomore or junior year in high school. Although students' academic grades at the time of enrollment vary greatly, each must be deemed to have college potential.

Components

In general, Upward Bound programs consist of:

- A six-week summer residential program which includes: academic classes in English and mathematics skills, humanities and other areas; work experiences or other career information and development experiences; recreational workshops and field trips; camping and outdoor recreational trips; and residential life and counseling services provided by Upward Bound counselors. Teachers from the sending schools are encouraged to visit the summer program.

- A school year program which includes: continuous monitoring of academic progress; tutoring services; career development and college planning services; college visits; admissions/financial aid/SAT applications assistance; student advocacy with financial aid and admissions officers; periodic reunions for students and their families; and counseling.

The program is successful because of:

- low student-staff ratios;
- staff training to increase understanding of program and participant goals, motivation and sensitivity to student needs;
- attention given to each student individually and in small groups;
- unconditional caring for each student as a special person;
- continuous year round individual contact with students, including school visits and periodic get-togethers;
- significant contact and involvement with family members; and
- building a strong sense of community and belonging.

Accomplishments

Graduates of the Upward Bound program enter and complete higher education at rates exceeding 80%. Students enter every sort of post-secondary institution, both in-state and out-of-state. Participants usually show improved grades and tend to enroll in the more challenging courses which will prepare them for college. Self-esteem is enhanced and students feel successful and empowered as they increase their academic and social skills.

Budget

The program costs $2,000 to $3,000 per student.

Contact

Alan B. Parks
University of Maine
35 Shibles Hall
Orono, Maine 04469
(207) 581-2522

We Care

Non-parents, senior citizens and single people involved in school activities.

Location

Omaha, Nebraska.

Population Served

Middle school students and community members.

Purpose and Goals

We Care was initiated by a group of junior high school teachers who recognized the need to better integrate their students with the community. In many communities there are taxpayers who have minimal contact with schools. The junior high/middle school years are also a confusing time for students as they move from childhood to their teen years. Teachers felt that bringing the two groups together would enhance the positive self concept of the students by making them feel special, while helping residents feel that schools are important in their lives.

Planning

Initiated in 1978 at Omaha's Westbrook Junior High, We Care has an informal structure. Activities are centered around each homeroom and are driven by the interests of the students, their teacher and members of their extended family.

Components

There are three major components to We Care:

- Information: each community participant is mailed a monthly school newsletter listing special events and news about the school and its programs.
- Involvement: participants are invited to special lunches, musical performances, plays, athletic events and special events at the school. Opportunities are provided for volunteer work and sharing special skills and experiences for those who have the time or interest.
- Service: school facilities are opened to the participants as much as possible. Students also help community members with projects outside of the school, such as raking lawns, running errands and shoveling snow.

Each homeroom in the school adopted at least one resident of the neighborhood. With an enrollment of 285, the school adopted fifty residents. Students and staff refer to these new friends as their "extended family." The principal sent a brief survey to the adopted residents to gain a better insight on their interests and followed up with a group meeting to discuss their concerns and needs.

It is a fascinating and absolutely joyous experience to see two or three generations of citizens reacting to each other. The experience of these adults cannot help but improve community-school relations.

-Teacher

The following activities are among those that emerged from the program:

- shared Christmas and Thanksgiving dinners with students in the school cafeteria;
- greeting cards are exchanged on special occasions;
- personal invitations to school plays and musical programs (when necessary, transportation is provided);
- special talents and expertise, such as quilt making, bicycle repair and wood working, are shared with students;
- community use of the staff health and fitness center, the industrial shop and the library; and
- residents have the opportunity to attend classes with students in computer basics, art and other subjects.

Accomplishments

One of the unexpected outcomes of We Care is the students' enthusiasm for the program. They initiate many of the new activities because they want to, not because they have to. And the residents carry the message to their neighbors, many of whom have contacted the school to join the program.

We Care survived a major restructuring of the school district in 1987. Though some home rooms have not yet adopted residents, many program activities have become institutionalized. In future years, We Care will place additional emphasis on special favors, visits and school performances for persons in retirement homes, care facilities and hospitals.

Budget

The program has very minimal expenses – some postage and the cost of special occasion dinners (about $300-400 per year).

Contact

Les Sladek
Westside Middle School
8601 Arbor Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68114
(402) 393-4335

School Profiles

Franklin Alternative School ..... page 55
Maranacook Community School 57
Piscataquis Community High School 59
River Valley Alternative School 61
Skowhegan Area Middle School 63
Windham Primary Schools 65

Franklin Alternative School

Students accept full responsibility for determining their success.

Location

Auburn, Maine.

Population Served

At-risk students in grades 10-12.

Background

The Franklin Alternative School began in 1977 as a night school for students at-risk of dropping out of the regular high school program. The structured night school schedule for fifteen high school students allowed them to work during the day. After the first year, it became evident that dealing with the cycle of school failure required a more intensive effort; one which provided a clear incentive for individual students to take responsibility for their own academic success.

The superintendent established a planning group to consider an ideal structure for an alternative school program. The group focused on five questions:

1. Teenagers believe that a diploma is important, so how could they be kept coming to school?

2. Teachers of required courses had the most clout with students, especially at the end of the semester when credit for courses was given. How could all teachers be given more clout each day?

3. Students respond to an immediate pay back. How could they be rewarded in a meaningful way for success in school?

4. Attitude, not intelligence, was keeping students from learning. How could a positive attitude for education be fostered in high school students?

5. People respect a system that demands responsibility and accountability. How could the system be changed to demand responsibility and accountability from students and teachers?

This place means a lot to me. I've got my head on straight and I've got staying power.
–An 11th grade student

The answers the committee found to these questions became the foundation for the Franklin Alternative School, which officially opened its doors in 1978 in a former elementary school. Today, Franklin's staff consists of seven faculty, principal, secretary and custodian. Enrollment averages ninety students.

Key Elements

The Franklin Alternative School has one goal: "Get students ready for life." Although this may require a different skill emphasis for each student, it was agreed that the basic tools necessary include:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Accountability
- Communication
- Math

The first three tools relate to the need to build individual character; the remaining two encompass the academics necessary for a diploma (communication covers reading, writing and verbal skills).

The two most important aspects of Franklin School's structure are its philosophy and the incentive point system.

Philosophy
Franklin Alternative School's success lies in the deep conviction of all who work there that students will behave differently if you treat them differently. Students are given the same respect that would be given to any adult. They are given guidance and support but know that their success in school is their own responsibility. Entering students and their parents meet with the principal for an introduction to the philosophy of the school. Traditional school rules are so deeply ingrained in our society that it takes time to acclimate people to alternatives and to help them feel secure about their responsibilities.

The primary qualities looked for in staff for Franklin are "heart, personality and caring." Teachers can learn to develop skills as educational facilitators and let go of some of their traditional beliefs that they are solely responsible for a student's success in school.

Incentive Points
Students earn incentive points in two categories, character and academic performance, for each class that they attend. Character points are based on attendance, respect for teachers, other students, school property and demonstrated effort in class. It is possible to earn three character points per day per class. A student may earn up to four academic points per day per class on the basis of class performance. Teachers post a list of the points earned by a student the preceding day and students receive a weekly report of their point standing. They know the number of points needed to be promoted to the next grade or to graduate and are always aware of their progress.

The teachers and administrators of the school are responsible for implementing the program and keeping a record of the students' points. All have to be well versed in the guidelines for earning and losing points. However, each student is responsible for his/her own success in school.

Certain unacceptable behaviors result in the loss of points from a student's daily total. It is also possible to earn extra points by doing extra credit work and maintaining perfect attendance for fifteen days or thirty days. Students know that if their point total becomes too low to pass all subjects, they will be suspended from school for the semester. If suspended, the school tries to guide the student toward the support necessary to bring his or her life back into focus. Students are given the opportunity to return to school the next semester.

Accomplishments

Franklin Alternative School's effectiveness is demonstrated by the number of students who finish high school. In Franklin's first ten years, 80% of its students have completed the program successfully. That rate increased to 95% in 1989 due in large part to the hiring of an at-risk counselor. The counselor is the direct liaison between dropouts and the school system. She has helped students through difficult times in the traditional high school and helped them enroll in the Adult Education Program or find a spot at Franklin.

The success of the program has led to the creation of another alternative school for students in grades 7-9. Opening in the fall of 1989, it will be housed in a building formerly used as an elementary school. Thirty 7th and 8th graders and thirty 9th graders will be served, creating openings for fifteen additional slots at Franklin for students in the 10th-12th grades. The philosophy and structure of the new program will be adapted from the experiences at Franklin, with the same principal and some of the same staff.

Contact

David Eretzian
Franklin Alternative School
Pine Street
Auburn, Maine 04210
(207) 782-3242

Maranacook Community School

A model for building student responsibility and community pride.

Location

Readfield, Maine.

Population Served

Students in grades 7-12.

Background

In 1976, Maranacook Community School opened its doors to the communities of Readfield, Wayne, Mt. Vernon and Manchester. The challenge for the new school was to integrate students from several elementary schools into a single school community. Programs were designed to support student growth and to develop student responsibility both within the school and within the community. Activities were planned to help students develop communication skills, to build group trust and cohesiveness, to expand awareness of academic and career options and to prepare for graduation. Teachers were hired who agreed to take on the added responsibility of serving as an adult advisor/advocate for students on an ongoing basis.

Key Elements

Advisor/Advisee System

The advisor/advisee program provides a comprehensive support system for students, parents and staff. Every 7th grade student is assigned to an advisee group of twelve students and an adult advisor with whom they will stay through grade 12. Groups meet every day, with special days set aside for group activities.

The program ensures that every student has an adult advocate in the school. It provides communication and support among students, staff and parents through individual and group meetings, home visits and a unique approach to discipline which focuses on dialogue, understanding, and alteration of inappropriate patterns of student behavior rather than punishment. Flexibility allows for a change of group in the case of a mismatch between advisor and advisee.

Kids here don't fall through the cracks.
- a student

Through the program, students are encouraged to understand themselves and others better; to develop positive self images; to participate in academic programs which reflect their interests and abilities; to acquire life skills; and to respect the values of honesty, integrity and responsibility. The program requires the commitment of students, parents, staff and administrators to these goals.

Each grade level works on specific areas: 7th grade on team building and self-exploration; 8th grade on career awareness and exploration; 9th grade on decision-making and problem-solving skills; 10th grade on awareness of the relationship between educational choices and specific careers; 11th grade on leadership skills and personal/group responsibility; and 12th grade on preparing and carrying out post-graduation plans.

Student Government

Consistent with the Maranacook philosophy of student responsibility and meaningful participation in the school, Maranacook gives students the opportunity to participate in staff hiring,

in student development activities, on policy boards and as representatives on state committees, such as the Governor's Task Force on Adolescent Pregnancy. Students are active participants in school affairs. The student senate makes recommendations to the school administration about school climate issues, extra-curricular offerings and the advisor system needs. A wide range of opinion and involvement is seen as desirable in the student government.

Students take their roles as student government representatives of their advisee groups quite seriously and the selection process encourages the participation of all students, regardless of academic achievement.

The ISB Process

Maranacook's ISB or Inappropriate Student Behavior Process is a personalized discipline approach. The philosophy is that inappropriate student behavior should result in learning and should be altered. The major goals of the ISB process are to help students discriminate between appropriate and inappropriate behavior, to help students understand the consequences of inappropriate behavior and to provide a system of fair judgment and disciplinary action resulting in behavior modification. Emphasis is placed on student responsibility, parental involvement and individually tailored consequences.

Individual teachers are expected to handle discipline problems, but when the situation warrants, the student's advisor is notified and an ISB meeting is called. The student faces accusers, responds to the charges of misbehavior and is required to determine what an appropriate consequence for the behavior will be. The use of behavioral contracts and improved communication between student, teacher advisor and parent are stressed.

A final component of this unique approach to student discipline is a strategy reinforcing positive behavior. Teachers send gold slips to advisors when they "catch a student doing something right."

Accomplishments

Maranacook's approach to student support, to student participation in school affairs and to student discipline as part of the learning process helps young people develop responsibility. Students don't "fall through the cracks" because they have an advocate, someone who cares for them in school. Advisors serve as role models for positive, healthy, long-term relationships as well as providing non-parent adult relationships. Team building among diverse individuals is encouraged. Accountability of teachers to and for each other is increased. The program also provides direct communication between the school and the parents.

Contact

Hazel Rand
Maranacook Community School
P.O. Box 4177
Readfield, Maine 04355
(207) 685-4923

Piscataquis Community High School

An aggressive school and community effort that encourages students to believe in themselves and their future.

Location

Guilford, Maine.

Population Served

Students in grades 9-12.

Background

In the fall of 1985, the principal of Piscataquis Community High School, adult education director, guidance counselor and several staff members began developing a plan to address several academic concerns.

The number of PCHS students going on to post-secondary education was below the state average from 1975-85 (32% vs. 45%). And those students going on to college were not applying to out-of-state schools or highly selective Maine colleges. Students in the college preparatory program seldom exceeded 20% of the student population, the business education program was exclusively female oriented and lacked a positive self image and general-level students were not motivated to set specific goals or select challenging programs. The community as a whole had low aspirations and accepted the idea that their school was not equal to other area schools.

This committee evolved into an Aspirations Committee with a philosophy that education is for all kids and is everyone's responsibility. They formulated the following goals for PCHS:

- establish teacher-advisor groups to develop personal relationships, provide career counseling and promote academic performance;
- develop programs to promote academic excellence;
- establish a college outreach program to provide an opportunity for students to visit schools with their advisor;
- establish a post-secondary education scoreboard (including military training); and
- involve the community in promoting academic excellence and post-secondary education.

Raising aspirations includes a number of efforts to communicate to students, their parents and the community-at-large that the quality of life beyond school is largely determined by the decisions one makes and the goals one sets while in school. Students do not need to settle for second best just because they come from a small, rural community in Maine.

Key Elements

The goals have provided the structure for internal changes that have contributed to promoting the aspirations of students and make PCHS an effective community school.

Restructuring of the Curriculum

Restructuring has resulted in very clear expectations for students. Every student takes algebra and is encouraged to take two years of a foreign language. (In order to build support for an expanded foreign language program, French III students go to the middle schools to teach French.) Specialty courses have been created addressing the needs of a wider range of students. More fine arts programs have been introduced, and technology has been integrated into the curriculum with access for all students.

Project Grasp
Grasp is the cornerstone of aspirations in Guilford. The program is aimed at students, teachers, parents and the community. Informational meetings scheduled throughout the year increase awareness of the need to raise aspirations and reduce parents' anxiety regarding college application process, financial aid and adjusting to their children leaving home after graduation.

Other components of Project Grasp include a network support system for students already attending college in an effort to keep them there. This system includes a career day, college visitations and recognition for post-secondary acceptance.

Faculty Advisor System
A system was designed to provide more direct guidance for students and create a caring, more personal relationship between students and teachers. Staff development programs are being expanded to provide more training for advisors to increase their effectiveness.

High Expectations
Expectations for the students and the staff are very high. Teachers are urged to "learn for the future" and continue their studies as much as possible. The administration actively supports the application for DECS Innovative Grants ($35,000 was received in 1988-89) and promotes an extensive public relations program. PCHS has received the National Arts Award and a staff member was a finalist for Maine Teacher of the Year in 1989.

Accomplishments

The number of Piscataquis Community High School students accepted into post-secondary programs has climbed from 63.6% in 1986 to 74% in 1989, double the 32% of the previous ten years. Students are applying and are being accepted at many of the top schools in the country, and both student and community attitudes have changed. The community has a positive perception of the school, and in response, is supplying additional tax dollars and special support group for projects.

Contact

Norm Higgins
Piscataquis Community High School
Blaine Avenue
Guilford, Maine 04443
(207) 876-4503

River Valley Alternative School

Building a foundation for success through student responsibility, community involvement and an individualized learning process.

Location

Turner, Maine.

Population Served

Students ages 15-20 from Turner, Leeds, Greene and Buckfield.

Background

The River Valley Alternative School is housed in one room of a former elementary school in SAD 52. It serves thirty to forty students with three full time faculty. The three-year old program was created to provide a second chance for dropouts and at-risk students who had few goals, little hope, low aspirations and poor self esteem. A planning process involving the superintendent, special education and adult education directors, concluded that helping the at-risk student population did not mean instituting a different curriculum, but rather providing a more flexible approach to learning and a support structure for taking risks. They developed a belief system for the alternative school that underscores what students and staff need to do every day:

- treat students as adults with the expectation that they will act like adults;
- guide students through an experience once so that they can take the initiative in the future;
- follow students progress after graduation; and
- demonstrate a positive attitude toward individual goals as well as the goals of the program.

Initially, the staff actually went door to door in an effort to bring young people back to school. Now potential students visit the school for a day and are interviewed by staff and students. After writing an essay on why they want to be in the alternative program, their applications are reviewed by an admissions committee with the final decision being made by the superintendent.

Key Elements

The school's success is linked to six major factors:

Credit by Objective
The River Valley Alternative School curriculum is the same as that offered by SAD 52's regional high school. However, the requirements for each course are stated as measurable objectives. The written objective checklists establish a framework for each course in small, manageable steps, so at each step there is a recognizable accomplishment. As students master an objective, that mastery is noted on both the student's and teacher's copy of the objectives. A final exam is taken when the course is completed and credit is awarded immediately. This ability to see regular progress toward earning credit for courses results in a feeling of being in control, which leads to higher self-esteem and greater motivation to succeed. In many courses, objectives have been established that go beyond those of the regular high school. For example, students are required to use a computer to write term papers for English; all students must take basic algebra; and fine arts courses require an awareness of the historical perspective of music and art.

Individualized, Self-Paced Instruction
Each student is enrolled with an individualized educational plan. Beginning with a transcript analysis, the staff works with the student to determine the number of required courses and electives needed for graduation. From the day they enter the program, the students are in control of their own education. They decide which courses to take, when

We have two goals for our students: that each accept and like themselves, and each excel, based on their individual gifts.

-Teacher

to take them, how many to take at one time, how far to go and how much extra work to do at home. Choosing their own learning pace means that students are not limited by arbitrary time constraints of class periods or traditional school semesters. This saves the student time and eliminates the boredom many felt previously.

Goal Setting
Each student sets goals, beginning with the long-range goal of success in the career that the student chooses, then narrowing to more immediate goals.

The immediate goals need to be quickly attainable so that the student sees success from his/her own decision making. Success breeds success, and students are able to express new hope and aspirations. This cycle replaces the negative cycle of failure and forgotten or abandoned dreams that the student has experienced in the past.

Advisor/Advisee Model
Each student is encouraged to choose a mentor/advisor from the staff or from the SAD 52 Adult Education faculty, central office staff or from the community. Each advisor serves as a role model and makes a commitment to pursue the best interests of that student, endeavoring to know the student on a personal level. Having a positive relationship with a successful adult is unique for many of the students.

This highly personalized advisor/advisee interaction may take many forms, such as chaperoning field trips, volunteer tutoring, home visits, sharing meals or practicing for the annual softball challenge game with the central office staff. The personal involvement, which transcends the traditional student-teacher relationship in a typical classroom environment, is one of the strongest forces leading to enhanced self-esteem and higher aspirations.

Flexibility, Flexibility, Flexibility
The River Valley Alternative School is open from 8:00 am to 9:00 pm Monday through Thursday and 8:00 am to 3:00 pm on Friday. Students schedule their weekly instructional time, taking into account the job schedule, availability of babysitters and counseling appointments.

Community Involvement
Community involvement is vital to the development of the whole person. In order for students to become full members of the community, they must recognize their responsibility to share their time and talents with their neighbors.

Community volunteer activities are planned for the students at different times during the year. The people of the community begin to see the students as positive, contributing members of the community and begin to take an active interest in their future. Students respond by changing their self perceptions from negative to positive, seeing themselves as important individuals in the social fabric of the community.

Accomplishments

River Valley Alternative School has a dropout rate below 2% and 68% of the graduates are pursuing further education. A 1988 district-wide attitudinal survey by the University of Maine found that 88% of the students view school as important; 69% look forward to going to school; 96% say their teachers encourage them to think for themselves; and 100% agree or strongly agree that their teachers try to make their subjects interesting.

The community's response has been gratifying. The school has received many donations in time, cash and in-kind services for the benefit of their enrichment activities, such as the annual trip to the art museums of Boston and a fund to help students pay college application fees.

In October, teacher Bill Nave was chosen as Maine's 1989 Teacher of the Year, the first alternative school teacher to be selected for that honor.

Contact

Mark Bechtel or Bill Nave
SAD 52
RFD 1 Box 1220
Turner, Maine 04282
(207) 225-3406

Skowhegan Area Middle School

Building self-esteem and improving academic performance in all students.

Location

Skowhegan, Maine.

Population Served

Students in grades 7-8.

Background

In less than three years, Skowhegan Area Middle School has changed from a traditional junior high school to a middle school designed "to better meet the needs of all the students." The change was initiated by the SAD 54 superintendent and school board; both were concerned about providing an educational experience appropriate to students in the middle years.

During 1986, the first transition year, a new principal was hired to implement these major changes. The principal provided the staff with research on middle school level education and the developmental needs of children in this age group. Teachers then identified the areas in which they would need more education to change from a tracked junior high school to an ungrouped middle school model. They focused on process writing, cooperative learning, differentiated instruction and computer-assisted instruction. A summer course in the use of computer technology and the writing process was provided for interested staff. Because teacher needs continue to differ, funding is provided to train staff on an individual basis.

Teachers are encouraged to share new information with their colleagues on their return.

Each teaching team determines its own staff development needs. Needs may differ from team to team, but all must reflect a commitment to a common school vision. Teams are also encouraged to develop interdisciplinary teaching units for use with their students.

Key Elements

Teams of Teachers and Students
Essential to a middle school concept is the practice of grouping all students and teachers in heterogeneous teams, with four teachers responsible for about 100 students. Student groups usually vary in age and academic background, though a variety of groupings are used to meet specific interests, learning styles and needs. Each team is located in a specific section of the school building and is responsible for its own schedule, budget, curriculum and common planning time. Because each team sets its own schedule, there are no bells during the school day. Parents may choose the team they prefer for their children.

An Interdisciplinary Core Curriculum
The goal of the school is to establish a community in which everyone is committed to learning. Classes are interdisciplinary and activities are directly related to the core curriculum objectives of the school. Active learning and problem solving is stressed by involving students in "hands-on" activities. Time

This is a friendly place to be . . . where kids can feel good about themselves, feel they have some control and can try out being independent. There is more openness among students, more activity-based learning, more emphasis on students taking responsibility for their behavior.

Teacher

periods are flexible, allowing for both large and small group activities and individual projects. Programs which have traditionally been "pull-out," such as special education and gifted and talented, are now part of the regular classroom.

Student success is measured in a variety of ways based on the school's core curriculum objectives, the developmental level of the student, handicapping conditions and intellectual and physical capabilities. Assessment methods continue to be developed cooperatively with the state, the community, experts within the field of testing and middle school age behavior and the staff. All students participate in a small group advisory program and students identified as at-risk are carefully monitored and provided with assistance as needed.

Open Communication with Parents and Students
A parent advisory committee and a student advisory committee work closely with the principal and staff on issues of school operation and procedure and ensure communication about the changes with the community. An open door policy for parents exists, welcoming them to the school.

Extracurricular Activities
Skowhegan Area Middle School has a group of programs, named for the school mascot, the Apache, which are designed to widen the experiences available to students. *Apache Time* extends learning into community activities and expands student interests. Two days a week during the last period of the day, students select one of forty different electives ranging from foreign language study to boat navigation, from service projects in the community to nature study.

Apache Pride encourages each of the five school teams to work on demonstrating school pride through attendance, behavior with substitutes and in the halls and lunchtime activities. Pennants are awarded to all teams meeting predetermined goals.

Apache After-School Adventure extends the school day for an hour to offer intramural sports and academic activities, use of the vocational shops and computer labs every day except Friday. The school district runs a late bus to enable all students to participate.

Achievement Rewards
Three times during the school year, student achievement in all areas is recognized by awarding letters for success in academics, attendance, behavior, effort, music, sports and other extracurricular activities. Twenty Students of the Month are honored each month. These activities reinforce the school belief that everyone can be successful and, although no one can do everything well, everyone can do something well.

Summer School Program
The summer school program, serving 44% of the student body, provides both remediation and enrichment through activities such as writing and computer use and extensive field experience.

Accomplishments

School climate has improved and measurable student achievement is rising. Test scores in math, reading and writing have gone from below to above average in four years. Student daily attendance is 96.5%, an increase of 8%. Teacher recognition is widespread, with many requests to give presentations nationally about the school program. School visitations by interested educators exceeded 125 in the 1988-89 school year and the community has a much more positive picture of the school.

Contact

Jerry Lynch
Skowhegan Area Middle School
Willow Street
Skowhegan, Maine 04976
(207) 474-3330

Windham Primary Schools

An elementary school restructured to support the individual needs of students and to provide for varied and active learning experiences.

Location

Windham, Maine.

Population Served

Students in grades K- 6.

Background

Eight years ago, Windham began the process of re-examining their primary grade education. Educators were concerned that the existing school structure and organization did not reflect what research has discovered about child growth and development. The elementary principal and teachers worked with the University of Southern Maine to design a developmental approach to early childhood education. The staff agreed on an educational philosophy and began researching, experimenting with format, piloting new approaches and encouraging teachers to explore new ways to match instruction with the school's philosophy.

Driving this effort was the belief that the most important skill for students in the 21st century will be knowing how to learn and that the role of the teacher is to create an environment in which students will take ownership and responsibility for life-long learning. Windham expects their staff to be models for the learning process and to serve as facilitators and resources for students.

An important component of the change process is the emphasis placed on increasing the knowledge and skills of staff. Ongoing staff development includes workshops in such areas as child development, effective schools, instructional strategies, multi-age/multi-ability groupings and the implications of developing technologies. These workshops are supplemented by a summer Teachers Academy that provides in-depth opportunities for faculty to examine new approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. One staff member serves half-time as a researcher, locating and summarizing pertinent articles, identifying resources and making them available to staff.

Key Elements

Flexible Options

Windham is creating a learning structure in which all students see themselves as successful learners. The school offers many options for students and considers students' learning styles and developmental levels in grouping them. Multi-age and multi-ability groupings are used, with special education integrated into the regular classrooms. A K-3 integrated resource handbook is being developed by the staff. Theme webbings, curriculum concepts and a bibliography of available materials is included in this guide. An integrated curriculum and flexible scheduling enable teachers to meet individual needs. As a result, students become more self-directed and more responsible for their own learning.

Hands-on Activities

All content areas include hands-on instructional strategies that teach students in ways they learn best – through first-hand, active experiences. Students use blocks, pumpkin seeds and macaroni to learn the basic math operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Field-based experiments teach

Did you ever read one of those 'too-good-to-be-true' articles in Educational Leadership *that describes a school in which the kids are happy, the teachers are happy, the principal is happy, and everyone works together? Problems exist, but people believe they can be solved creatively? Issues are present but the staff looks forward to tackling them? That's Windham.*

–Consultant

students the processes as well as the facts of science. Social studies provide an opportunity for children to map their classroom, their school and their neighborhood. Language arts connects all content areas by using these hands-on activities as a springboard for reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Advancement Policies
The staff has developed policies for advancement of students which place students according to their needs. An assessment handbook offering a range of alternative assessment strategies, including structured teacher observation of all students, is being produced to use in evaluating students. The assessment will measure the child's emotional, social, academic and physical growth to determine when new settings, levels, and groupings are appropriate.

Developmental Kindergarten Program
The Aikens Kindergarten Center at Windham uses the program First Step, an age-appropriate kindergarten designed to meet the needs of students who are not developmentally ready to move to first grade. First Step, modeled on the High/ Scope Preschool Program, is an individualized classroom program reflecting the needs and interests of each child. Kindergarten screening profiles are used to select fifteen to eighteen (out of 200) students who are developmentally young. Differences in behavior between age peers are viewed as developmental delays, not deficiencies. Basing activities on this orientation, teachers create developmentally appropriate experiences for each child within the classroom.

Accomplishments

At Windham Primary Schools, continuous student progress is the norm. Student self-esteem and academic achievement have increased. Their Parent Teacher Committee, which offers community input, has won the National Advocate's Award for the past two years.

Contact

Donna Stephen
Windham Primary Schools
225 Windham Center Road
Windham, Maine 04062
(207) 892-1840

Resource Profiles

Adult and Community Education ..... page 67
Career Exploration and Education 69
Community and School Based Support Groups 71
Higher Education Linkages 73
Hurricane Island Outward Bound School 75
Innovative Educational Grant Program 77
Maine Computer Consortium 79
Maine Facilitator Project 81

Adult and Community Education

Providing adults with access to degree and non-degree courses through local high schools.

Background and Accomplishments

Maine has more than 238,000 adults over the age of 18 who have not completed high school. Approximately 25% of entering high school freshman will drop out of school before completing their diploma requirements. The demands of society for an educated work force are ever increasing. As technology occupations rise, educational requirements in the area of basic skill increase. The program has two goals: to provide access to creative and flexible learning opportunities; and to link Maine's public schools to other agencies and industries to effect personal and economic growth.

The many programs offered throughout the state have resulted in the following accomplishments:

- Maine has over 150 local adult and community education providers who operate courses at more than 750 sites. Nearly 50% of these programs offer courses in adult basic education, literacy, reading, math and basic skills.
- There were 90,000 enrollments in Maine Adult Education Programs in 1988.
- At least 68,000 adults were enrolled in funded adult diploma, vocational education and vocational training courses in 1988.
- 13,000 adults were in Adult Basic Education courses in 1988.
- Of all high school diplomas issued in Maine, one out of four are issued through the GED program.
- GED programs are being offered at twenty-seven business sites.

Resources Available

The special needs of each community drive the development of Adult and Community Education Programs. Lifelong learning opportunities offer support services, employability skills and life coping skills as well as basic education skills. The following are examples of some unique programs that have been successful.

Lewiston's Parenting Workshops
Parenting classes are offered every semester at Lewiston Adult Education, with individual sessions made available to local businesses for their employees. Lewiston's Adult Ed director saw a great need to go to the parents who were most in need of assistance with their children. Child development experts present information and support to parents in such areas as communicating better with their child, helping children and parents accept the consequences of their behavior and fostering responsibility for decision making.

During the first year of the program, parenting classes were offered at Lewiston High School and one local business. However, parents who are not comfortable in a school setting are not able to go into a school at night for

Adult and Community Education professionals believe that education is a lifelong process and that all Maine citizens have the right to responsive, flexible, accessible educational programs that will assist them in improving their personal and career potential, their quality of life, and that will empower them to participate as enlightened, informed members of our society.

–Statement of Philosophy

classes. Therefore, businesses in the community are being urged to offer classes and workshops to their employees at the work site. This is a much more comfortable setting for the employee and conveys the message that their employers view education and family responsibilities as important. Several more businesses are expected to participate in the second year of the program. Classes will also be offered at the elementary schools to encourage parents to come into the schools that their children attend.

Waterville's Project Even Start
Project Even Start is geared toward parents with children ages one through seven. Its goal is to give parents the skills to teach their children the importance of education. In the process, parents also learn about child development and parenting.

The unique aspect of Project Even Start is that it takes place in the home. Four trained staff go into the home two hours per week for eleven months. Parents who have not completed high school, work toward their GED. Parents who have completed high school but are low-level readers receive tutoring. Transportation to the adult education center and childcare is provided if necessary.

Caribou's Adult Learning Center
Traditionally, people consider Adult Education to be an evening program, but many women cannot leave their families in the evenings. If, as studies show, the mother's level of education has the most influence on a child's level of education, then services must be made readily accessible to mothers in need. The goal of the Adult Learning Center is to make education as accessible as possible to everyone in the community. A former middle school building that closed due to decreasing enrollments is now housing a variety of programs for Caribou adults seeking to improve their education and their children.

Contact

Dana Green
Department of Educational & Cultural Services
State House Station 23
Augusta, Maine 04333
(207) 289-5854

Career Exploration and Education

Model programs to encourage career exploration and life skills development from kindergarten through adulthood.

Background and Accomplishments

Career exploration and education have always been seen as a necessary facet of schooling because if students have some sense of future plans and goals, they are more apt to take learning seriously. However, career education programs have often been uncoordinated and haphazard. With the increased interest in student aspirations and achievement, it is apparent that a sequenced career awareness and exploration program, which stresses learning as a life-long activity and the development of life skills, is needed. Through the work of the University of Maine System, DECS, Maine Occupational Information and Coordinating Committee, Maine Career Education Consortium, the Maine Committee on Aging and New England Telephone, a number of comprehensive career awareness and education curricula have been developed.

With the increased interest in student aspirations and achievement, it is apparent that a sequenced career awareness and exploration program, which stresses learning as a life-long activity and the development of life skills, is needed.

Resources Available

Project PREP: Planning to Realize Educational Potential (Grade 8)
Developed by DECS, Maine Career Education Consortium, Maine Occupational Information Coordinating Committee and the Kennebec Valley Technical College, Project PREP is an eight lesson career awareness program for eighth graders. Each unit is a starting point for career exploration and teachers and counselors are encouraged to expand on them. The curriculum includes units on Self-Awareness, Building a Personal Profile, Career Awareness, The World of Work, Decision Making, Career Exploration and Developing an Educational and Career Preparation Plan. The PREP curriculum is hands-on and experiential. Students are asked to analyze themselves and their abilities, values and interests. Students are also encouraged to pursue out-of-class activities such as interviewing a person who works in an occupation which they are exploring and visiting a worksite. PREP helps students relate their education to future work plans and to develop a relevant high school program. Nearly two-thirds of all eighth graders in Maine are involved with this project.

Future Builders (Grades 9-12)
Designed by a group of high school educators, Future Builders is a curriculum guide for those who wish to incorporate sequenced career education and life planning in their high school. The program prepares students for an uncertain future by providing them with a process, information and resources necessary to make intelligent decisions about their futures. Parents are included in the exploration. Each grade level explores specific topics:

- Ninth Grade: includes program goals and expectations, future scenarios, self-assessment, life work goals and parent orientation.
- Tenth Grade: includes needs assessment, self-awareness, effective communication, assertiveness, group communication, bias and stereotyping, decision making, career exploration and entry-level requirements, post-secondary education and training and career biography.
- Eleventh Grade: includes visits to Maine post-secondary schools, businesses, site reports, job shadowing and gathering information.

- Twelfth Grade: includes needs assessment, budgeting, banking services, wellness, rights and responsibilities of citizenship, legal issues, community resources, time management, resume writing, interviewing, problem solving, conflict resolution and saying good-bye.

- Parent Guide: includes curriculum overview and homework guide and suggestions for parent/school involvement in the program through the four years. The curriculum does not require additional staff or expensive resources. It is adaptable to the needs of individual school programs.

The Maine Guide
DECS has contracted for the development of *The Maine Guide*: a comprehensive career awareness program which will be completed in December, 1989. The Guide will provide units for kindergarten through grade seven and an adult education component and will include Project PREP and Future Builders in its completed format. The result will be a sequenced career awareness package for Maine students of any age. These units are designed to be adaptable for school use, either integrated into existing programs or presented separately.

Open Water and Safe Harbors (Grades 6-12)
Developed in 1988 by the Maine Committee on Aging, Open Water and Safe Harbors is an intergenerational career and life planning curriculum. Groups of trained senior citizens serve as mentors for the students. Materials include five video tapes and a teacher's guide. Each twenty-minute video tape features two high school students exploring the values, education, careers, relationships and the impact of events in the lives of senior citizens. After viewing each tape, students form small groups led by a volunteer mentor to discuss the issues raised in the tape and their relationship to the students' lives. Teachers who have used this curriculum report that it works best with students grade ten and older.

CHOICES
In 1988, New England Telephone Company began implementation of CHOICES, a two-day motivational and life skills seminar for 9th grade students. The seminar is conducted in the classroom by trained employees of New England Telephone. CHOICES was developed by Pacific Northwest Bell to demonstrate to high school freshmen the importance of education in preparing for adult life and to urge them to consider a wide variety of options in their future. The success of this program has led to its development as a franchised seminar which New England Telephone has purchased for a multi-year educational effort in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Maine. It is provided free of cost.

Contact

Nancy Perry
Department of Educational & Cultural Services
State House Station 23
Augusta, Maine 04333
(207) 289-5925

Romaine Turyn
Maine Committee on Aging
State House Station 127
Augusta, Maine 04333
(207) 289-3658

Community and School Based Support Groups

A model for setting up and implementing support programs to prevent alcohol and drug abuse, teen pregnancy and child abuse.

Background and Accomplishments

In 1978, the Division of Alcohol and Drug Education Services of the Maine Department of Educational & Cultural Services (DECS) realized that their efforts to stem alcohol and drug abuse through school prevention programs was not working. Being school based, the programs did not include community involvement or responsibility. The Division developed a new initiative – training community teams made up of parents, police, clergy, town officials, students, school administrators and school staff to work together to create a prevention and education plan which would address their local needs.

As these community-school programs were implemented and students became more knowledgeable about alcoholism and the abuse of other drugs, it became apparent that another component was needed: support for the recovering abuser as well as for those affected by abusers. Support groups, either in schools or in community agencies, provide a safe arena for young people to share their problems and their pain, to learn that they are not alone and how to make responsible choices in their lives.

The DECS model is geared to substance abuse, but problems of child abuse and teen pregnancy, which emerge as concerns of group participants, are also explored in the support group setting. By sharing personal experiences, young people begin to gain control over their problems rather than feeling controlled by the problems. Support groups also help students resolve key developmental tasks necessary to grow to be responsible, competent adults. Schools in which support groups have been developed report increased self-esteem and mental health among participants. Young people recovering from chemical dependency are more likely to continue their recovery. Children learn how to discuss and handle their problems.

Support groups, either in schools or in community agencies, provide a safe arena for young people to share their problems and their pain, to learn that they are not alone and how to make responsible choices in their lives.

Resources Available

In a week-long workshop given by Division of Alcohol and Drug Education staff, community teams learn about substance abuse and strategies to prevent it and work on plans to implement in their communities when they return. These plans usually include:

- creating community awareness of the problems by giving presentations to community and school groups;
- providing mechanisms to identify adults and students with substance abuse problems and to encourage them to go into treatment;
- developing support groups for students and teachers dealing with substance abuse and other issues; and
- finding and implementing a curriculum in the schools that would help students to avoid drug problems.

Staff from the Division are available to assist schools in setting up support programs. *Support Groups in our Schools*, a booklet written by the Division of Alcohol and Drug Education, outlines the procedures to follow in setting up support systems to meet a variety of needs and for teaching the skills necessary to run support groups.

Establishing a local support group requires a coordinator with specialized skills or a group of administrators and faculty manage the program. Group facilitators may be drawn from the school staff, the community or both. Target populations are students at risk, concerned or affected persons and recovering abusers. The groups meet weekly or more often, and frequently assesses the progress of their members. Monthly supervision for facilitators in their activities is provided by the coordinator.

Evaluation is part of the program through a tracking and reporting system. The coordinator tracks the numbers of students using the groups and the duration of their involvement. Group facilitators write progress reports and meet together for supervision. Groups assess their members' progress toward their personal goals.

Many of the plans have been highly successful. One, at Oxford Hills High School in South Paris, created Project Graduation, a chemical-free graduation celebration which has been adopted by most high schools in Maine and has become a model nationally. Other model programs in schools include:

- Bucksport Elementary School uses a primary prevention curriculum, Children Are People (CAP), with support groups for all students. The program is tied to a guidance plan with a clear dropout prevention component and to the health curriculum.

- Skowhegan Area Middle School has developed a process for involving students in prevention efforts including rap groups and theater groups. Contracts are used effectively to help young people gain control of drug and alcohol problems.

- Lincoln Academy, through student awareness and leadership programs and support groups, has changed the norms of the school so that "it is not cool to use drugs."

Contact

Michel Lahti
Department of Educational & Cultural Services
State House Station 57
Augusta, Maine 04333
(207) 289-6500

Higher Education Linkages

A variety of higher education programs serving Maine educators.

Background and Accomplishments

Maine is fortunate to have a number of post-secondary educational facilities located throughout the state. These institutions are being increasingly recognized as valuable sources of information, ideas and training by school administrators, teachers and students. This higher education link has significant potential and its value is highlighted in the sampling of programs featured below.

Resources Available

Colby College Faculty and Staff Resource Directory

Discussions with teachers in local schools suggested that many teachers are looking for a way to contact scientists willing to answer their questions about science and to offer assistance and suggestions for effective presentation of scientific subjects in the classroom. Professor Jay Labov compiled a directory of twenty-two faculty and staff, representing 56% of the departments in the Division of Natural Sciences at Colby, who indicated a willingness to become more involved with pre-college science education. The people listed in the directory are willing to answer questions about science raised by students, visit classrooms, host field trips to the Colby science facilities and lend or donate equipment to local schools. A link between college and pre-college faculties will aid in strengthening pre-college science education.

The Resource Directory was distributed in February, 1989 to four school districts in communities which surround the campus: Waterville, SAD 47, SAD 49 and Union 52. The directory will be offered to outlying school districts in the fall of 1989.

Contact

Jay B. Labov
Department of Biology
Colby College
Waterville, Maine 04901
(207) 872-3329

Higher education institutions are being increasingly recognized as valuable sources of information, ideas and training by school administrators, teachers and students.

University of Maine Middle Level Summer Institute

The Middle Level Summer Institute was created in 1984 by the University of Maine and the University of Southern Maine for educators and lay people interested in improving middle level school programs. University faculty and middle level experts provide long-term assistance in the tasks of planning and implementing quality programs for middle level students.

The purpose of the Middle Level Summer Institute is to provide opportunities to learn more about the development of students and programs appropriate for this age, to work as a school team on a common project and to encourage professional networking. For five days in July teachers, principals, counselors, school board members and parents from school districts throughout Maine meet at the University of Maine. A wide variety of topics are offered ranging from curriculum development and team development to harnessing the change process. These are structured as team meetings, individual sessions and general sessions.

The first institute in July, 1985 attracted thirty individuals representing four middle schools. By 1989 there were over three hundred participants. The cost for the Institute is $375 per person, which includes room and board, materials. Participants are eligible to receive three graduate credits or 4.5 continuing education credits.

Contact

Edward Brazee
University of Maine
121 Shibles Hall
Orono, Maine 04469
(207) 581-2482

University of Maine Cooperative Extension

With offices located in each of Maine's sixteen counties, the Cooperative Extension Centers are providing programming for students statewide. Among the programs that are available are "Seeing What I Can Be," a fourteen part career education series geared to middle school students. The 4-H program is probably one of the best known of UMCE student activities. Open to all students between ages six and eighteen, 4-H encourages students to select projects that interest them and work under the leadership of adult volunteers. Each county in Maine offers the 4-H Club program .

Contact

Louis Fourman
UM Cooperative Extension
Orono, Maine 04469
(207) 581-3875

Hurricane Island Outward Bound School

Wilderness adventures that teach people to push themselves beyond their preconceived limits.

Background and Accomplishments

For twenty-five years, Hurricane Island Outward Bound School programs have been offering people of all ages personal outdoor adventures in a variety of settings from Maine to Florida. Though the location and the length of the courses differ, they are all based on the belief that people can do more than they think they can. Courses involve both physical and personal challenge. Participants learn to work as part of a group, trust their colleagues and rely on their own inner resources. A wide range of people come to Outward Bound: students; parents; professionals; and people who work in government, manufacturing and businesses. No two Outward Bound courses are exactly the same, but common components run through all courses. Components include:

- A training expedition to develop physical stamina, basic skills and group cohesion to make their course run smoothly and safely.
- A solo period of one to three days when the participants are alone, away from the distractions and responsibilities of normal life. For some, solo is one of the most powerful elements of the course; for others, it is a time for rest and reflection.
- A series of group activities to achieve common goals. Rock climbing, rappeling and the ropes course are designed to test self-confidence and the ability to work out perceived risks in a safe but challenging situation.
- A final expedition, planned by the participants with a minimum of staff help, involving teamwork, initiative and flexibility.

Outward Bound headquarters is in Rockland, Maine, and the sailing and sea kayaking courses begin there. Courses in ski touring, winter camping, backpacking, canoeing and bicycling start in Newry, Maine.

Educators the world over could learn from the quality and the training of the staff. The instructors are incredibly calm and exude competence. When they ask you to do something, you do it despite your own doubts.

–Outward Bound participant

Resources Available

Schools can use the resources of Outward Bound in courses for administrators, faculty, students, community members or individuals. The learning process at Outward Bound schools is experiential. Instructors teach the necessary skills for each activity from the beginner's level, regardless of previous experience. Through hands-on learning, groups progress through increasingly demanding tasks, developing new confidence and skills.

Outward Bound has worked with several Maine schools providing specially designed contract courses to students and faculty. For example:

- In the Bethel area, Telstar High School's entire sophomore class experiences a five-day winter camping program with faculty serving as assistant instructors. Telstar staff attends three-day training sessions which include using experiential methodology, helping people deal with stress and purposeful direction in curriculum design.

- Each year 10-15 students in Kennebunk High School's "Leadership in Action" course attend a five-day course which enables them to observe and practice leadership skills.

- Outward Bound courses are part of the alternative education program at Georges Valley High School in Thomaston.

Students in these programs have developed a greater sense of competence, leadership, self-esteem and better appreciation of others. Pilot courses are being created to help meet the needs of children from broken or substance abusing families and to provide training opportunities for teachers who want to lead programs in their districts. Outward Bound is prepared to negotiate fees for programs tailored to school needs through their contract office.

Contact

Celeste Frisbee
Hurricane Island Outward
Bound School
P.O. Box 429
Mechanic Street
Rockland, Maine 04841
(207) 594-5548

Innovative Educational Grant Program

Support for developing new programs in schools.

Background and Accomplishments

As part of its 1984 school reform initiative, the Maine Legislature created the Innovative Educational Grant Program as an ongoing source of support for educational development. It is designed as a catalyst for new ideas conceived by teachers and principals, to bring new energy to classrooms and schools. Often school districts find it difficult to budget for new programs, even if the idea seems sound.

The Innovative Grant program gives teachers and school districts an opportunity to try new ideas and to develop programs which are usually funded through the school budget once they are successful. From Fort Kent to Kittery and Rangeley to Lubec, students are participating in programs developed by their teachers and administrators. Teachers are working with colleagues to plan new strategies for improving curriculum and instructional practices. Innovative Grants are helping to pilot school restructuring projects in ten Maine schools. These programs are bringing new energy to Maine's schools, creating enriched programs for students, new professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators and new partnerships.

These new partnerships have fired the imaginations of those who have followed the progress of the innovative education projects. Working together, teachers are expressing a new enthusiasm for the professional work they are doing. "I look forward to the opening of school this year with new energy and excitement," noted one teacher engaged in planning a new program with her colleagues over the summer.

Our project has allowed us to experiment in a non-threatening way with a new concept.

–Grant recipient

Forming new partnerships is not easy. They require long hours and commitment to make them work. When asked for advice by new grant recipients, project directors said, "Be prepared to work many hours over and beyond what you planned . . . but it's worth it."

New resources are being injected into the school environment through partnerships that have developed with local arts organizations, museums, volunteer groups, businesses and state agencies. When individuals with different views of the world collaborate, new ideas emerge.

School-based grants are supporting the development of such diverse programs as PASS (People Actively Supporting Schools) to encourage parental involvement in the school in Dover-Foxcroft, an Environmental Studies Project involving extensive field work in Newport, and Prevention and Support for Children of Abuse/Neglect by teachers in Lewiston. Classroom grants include Understanding Cultural Diversity through a Canadian exchange program in Wells, Mainstreamed Education for Hearing Impaired Students in Freeport and Students on Stage providing an experience in theater in Old Orchard Beach.

Resources Available

Two types of grants are available under the program and assistance in grant writing is provided through regional workshops. The school-based grant is designed to promote improvement on a school-wide basis. These grants support efforts that focus on locally identified needs. Single school districts may receive up to $10,000 and groups of two or more schools or school administrative units may receive up to $20,000. These funds require that state funds be matched by school districts.

The classroom-based grant is awarded to teachers or to groups of teachers. Projects initiated and submitted by individual teachers may be awarded up to $2,000. Those initiated and submitted by two or more teachers working cooperatively may be awarded up to $5,000. These projects do not require matching funds. There are limited funds available for second and third year funding. Approximately 175 new grants and renewals are awarded each year.

Contact

Jean Konzal
Department of Educational &
Cultural Services
State House Station 23
Augusta, Maine 04333
(207) 289-5981

Maine Computer Consortium

An educational collaboration helping educators integrate educational technology.

Background and Accomplishments

The Maine Computer Consortium, serving over 625 schools in Maine, collaborates with educators to develop a partnership between education and technology. The Consortium was founded in 1984 by the Maine Center for Educational Services as a membership organization open to public and private educational institutions in Maine.

Many schools save the cost of their membership through two specific services: members can make unlimited copies of over 170 pieces of Minnesota Educational Computing Consortium (MECC) software for the cost of duplication and they can buy Apple computers at a substantial discount through a statewide bulk purchase program.

The Consortium has worked with schools throughout the state such as Turner, Anson and Skowhegan in developing a comprehensive plan for the integration of technology. Consultants have conducted inservice programs and workshops tailored to local district needs in schools from Limestone to York. Topics include such aspects of technology as the computer as a teacher tool, classroom management, and software for specific content areas. Descriptions of individual technology projects can be found in the handbook, *Technology in Maine Schools*.

Consulting services and participation in Consortium workshops are also available to non-member districts on a fee-for-service basis.

Resources Available

The Consortium's services include:

- assisting schools with short and long term planning, organization, implementation and evaluation of educational technologies in the school in a manner that will have maximum impact on student achievement, staff development and overall school improvement;
- conducting workshops, conferences and other in-service activities designed to improve the technical skills of educators, inform educators about promising educational computing practices and help educators integrate technology in the classroom;
- maintaining and supporting a network of teacher-consultants who offer regional hands-on workshops for fellow teachers;
- providing a library media center which contains books, periodicals, software and hardware review information, as well as a collection of over 1,500 software programs;

Information is a precious commodity in education ... information for planning, decision-making, and implementation. Our membership in the Maine Computer Consortium provides us with information concerning technology in education. It is a link to the rest of the state and the world.

Local Computer Coordinator

- operating an electronic bulletin board and mail system called ME-Link which allows users to communicate with one another, catch up on educational news, find out about up-coming events or discuss new products with local vendors;

- offering significant savings on hardware and software through a high volume purchase agreement with Apple Computer, Inc. and MECC Software; and

- acting as a liaison between Maine, New England, and national educational technology resources both in the public and private sectors.

Contact

Cathy Glaude
Maine Center for Educational Services
P.O. Box 620
Auburn, ME 04212-0620
(207) 783-0833

Maine Facilitator Project

An information source for validated programs meeting a wide variety of educational needs.

Background and Accomplishments

The Maine Facilitator Project, sponsored by the Maine Center for Educational Services, has served as the link between Maine educators and National Diffusion Network (NDN) programs since 1975. The NDN operates under the assumption that there are few problems encountered by schools that have not been solved in some other location – that there is usually "no need to reinvent the wheel." The NDN disseminates information about a wide array of approved programs so that educators may choose those which meet their needs. Ninety percent of the public schools in Maine have adopted at least one NDN program.

NDN programs have helped learners with many different needs – disabled pre-schoolers, disadvantaged children in the primary grades, high-achieving high school students and out-of-school adults, to name a few. There are NDN programs for many content areas, ranging from the basic skills of reading, mathmatics and oral and written communication to vocational and career education, consumer education and physical education. Other NDN programs provide training for teachers in instructional methods and classroom management techniques. Exemplary practices in science and technology are also available. Many of the programs have been developed by classroom teachers.

Resources Available

The Maine Facilitator Project helps Maine educators select suitable resources to improve instruction in their schools, provides information about model programs, helps match local needs to available resources and helps plan and arrange the staff training and assistance necessary for their successful implementation. For example, models for hands-on learning include:

- DPA, Diagnostic Prescriptive Arithmetic, a basic arithmetic program for grades 3-5.
- SITE, Successful Inservice through Turnkey Education, for teachers of grades 2-5. A mathematics inservice program for the development of higher level thinking skills through the use of manipulative materials.
- PRISMS, Physics Resources and Instructional Strategies for Motivating Students, grades 10-12. A physics program that relates physics to the lives of high school students.
- FAST, Foundation Approaches to Science Teaching, a field centered course in the concepts and methods of the physical, biological and earth sciences for grades 6-8.
- Hands-On Elementary Science, an instructional program for students in grades 1-5 that emphasizes the processes of science.

The NDN operates under the assumption that there are few problems encountered by schools that have not been solved in some other location – that there is "no need to reinvent the wheel."

All NDN programs are reviewed and validated by a national panel and are designed to be replicated. There is no cost for information on available programs, although a catalog describing all NDN programs is available at a cost of $10.00.

Contact

Elaine Roberts
Maine Center for Educational Services
P.O. Box 620
Auburn, Maine 04212-0620
(207)783-0833

Maine Aspirations Compact

The Maine Aspirations Compact is a two-year initiative established by Governor's Executive Order in January, 1988. The Compact is a state-wide education-business partnership whose purpose is to focus attention on the need to raise the personal aspirations and educational performance of Maine youth. The Compact provides an opportunity for Maine business people and educators to work as partners in developing and implementing creative strategies at the state and local level that help youth achieve three goals:

- raise their personal expectations;
- improve their academic performance; and
- expand their career, educational and personal choices.

Activities of the Maine Aspirations Compact include:

- Providing technical assistance to local aspirations compacts in identifying the aspirations issues in their communities and developing action plans for implementation over a two to three year period. Seven of the local compacts were awarded small incentive grants in 1988 to serve as local demonstration compacts. These demonstration compacts are involved in an independent evaluation to document their activities and results.

- Publishing *Helping Children Succeed*, a report which identifies strategies for raising student aspirations at the local level. Many of the programs, schools and resources profiled in this handbook are examples of how the implementation of these strategies can make a difference in the lives of children and adults.

- Developing a clearinghouse for information on successful education-business partnerships from around the country. The Compact also publishes information about its activities and local demonstration compacts and brings local compacts together to share information.

- Operating a summer enrichment program for high school students that provides structured individual and group learning activities. The program encourages personal growth through the exploration of academic disciplines, work experience and independent living.

The Compact is staffed by the Maine Development Foundation and the Department of Educational & Cultural Services. Day-to-day coordination is provided by the Maine Development Foundation. Beginning in January 1990, the functions and philosophy of the Compact will be carried on by the new Maine Aspirations Foundation. The Maine Aspirations Foundation is a private, non-profit organization which awards grants and provides technical assistance to partnerships in Maine to implement aspirations related programs.

Contact:

Leanne Greeley Bond, Program Staff
Laurie Winsor, Program Staff
Maine Aspirations Foundation
45 Memorial Circle
Augusta, Maine 04330
(207) 626-3113

Heidi McGinley
Director, School Volunteer Programs
Department of Educational &
Cultural Services
State House Stations 23
Augusta, Maine 04333
(207) 289-5981

University of Maine Aspirations Project

The University of Maine Aspirations Project is a statewide program that provides technical assistance, resources and research to schools, students and community groups. The Project assists communities and schools in developing programs and processes that maximize opportunities for student success. The Project views school and student empowerment as the key to productive educational reform.

Activities of the University of Maine Aspirations Project include:

- School Improvement Project: working with four school districts to help them improve their ability to serve their students. The program includes comprehensive staff training in communication and collegiality and program development and curriculum design which builds upon the individual strengths and needs of students.

- Summer Institute: a three-day workshop bringing together teams of faculty, staff and school board members to learn about the change process and develop local action plans for school improvement.

- Aspirations Teen Theater: an interactive theater project to raise interest and awareness among students and adults about aspirations and the many barriers that keep young people from achieving their life goals. The project tours in Maine community theaters and school settings, training students to develop and perform their own theater projects.

- Teen Summit: a three-day leadership institute for teams of students not ordinarily identified as leaders. Students participate in leadership training and team building activities. They evaluate aspirations programs for use in schools and think through obstacles that may interfere with the success of new programs. Finally, students and teachers develop action plans to make their schools better places for all students.

- Curriculum Development: opportunities for university faculty to meet with primary and secondary school faculty to explore curriculum content and effective and innovative teaching techniques.

- National Center for the Study of Aspirations: once established, the Center will coordinate, collect and sponsor national research on aspirations issues and support program development and dissemination. The Center will concentrate on making research findings available to those who are best able to apply them in schools and communities.

Contact:

William Preble, Project Director
Betsy Sweet, Project Associate
129 Shibles Hall
University of Maine
Orono, Maine 04469
(207) 581-2427